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MEMORIAL

TO THE

MANAGERS

OF THE

ROYAL INFIRMARY.

BY

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EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY MURRAY & COCHRANE, CRAIG'S CLOSE.

MDCCC.

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MEMORIAL

OF

DR. GREGORY.

SECTION I.

IN conſequence of my ſituation as Preſident of the Royal College of Phyſicians in Edinburgh, I have had for more than a twelvemonth paſt, and, if I live, ſhall have for near a twelvemonth to come, the honour of a place among the ordinary Managers of the Royal Infirmary.

Though thus but tranſiently connected with them, and with the management of that noble inſtitution over which they preſide, I think it my duty moſt earneſtly to call their attention to a long eſtabliſhed, but very bad peculiarity in the conduct of it, which to me, and to many others better qualified than I am to judge of it, has long appeared a very ſerious evil, and one which in ſome meaſure fruſtrates the benevolent purpoſe of this inſtitution.

I allude to the mode of attendance of the Surgeons. Inſtead of a few ſurgeons being appointed to the Hoſpital by the Managers, as the phyſicians are, during their lives and good behaviour, all the members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh are ſaid to be Surgeons to the Royal Infirmary; and every one of

them claims it as his *right* to act in his turn as attending and operating ſurgeon in this Hoſpital.

This ſtrange ſyſtem was at one time an innovation, the hiſtory of which is not quite forgotten. It is not however ſo generally known, but it is equally true, that it was and is a groſs violation of the *promiſe* of the original ſubſcribers and founders of the Infirmary, and an *infringement* of our *charter* obtained on the faith of that promiſe.

By the original inſtitution of this Hoſpital, as ſtated in the petition of the Managers to the King, praying him to erect them into a corporation, which petition is engroſſed, and the inſtitution itſelf recorded, and, as I ſhould think, unalterably eſtabliſhed, in the charter of this Infirmary, " Poor ſick, properly recommended, from any part of the country, who are not abſolutely " incurable, are to be entertained and taken care of by the Royal " College of Phyſicians of Edinburgh, and *ſome of the moſt ſkilful* " *Chirurgeons.*"

To this inſtitution and promiſe, on the faith of which, as ſtated in the petition, our charter was granted, the whole of the charter refers. For that expreſs purpoſe this corporation was conſtituted; and its powers are expreſsly limited to things conſiſtent with the laws of the realm, " *that may tend to promote the ſaid* " *charitable deſign*;" or, as it is more fully expreſſed in another place of the charter, " *as may beſt conduce to the charitable end and* " *purpoſe above mentioned.*"

It is plain that by our charter, the whole Royal College of Phyſicians had a right to attend in this Infirmary: but not ſo all the ſurgeons.

It is of importance to obſerve here, that the clauſe in the petition, and in the charter, putting the Phyſicians and the Surgeons on ſo different a footing with reſpect to their mode of attendance in the Infirmary, was by no means accidental, but deliberate, and intended

intended by the founders of the Hoſpital. There had been a violent diſpute between them and the Surgeons about it for ſome years before the charter was obtained, which was not till 1736. The temporary hoſpital had been conducted by the College of Phyſicians, (the original founders of the inſtitution), and by a few of the Surgeons choſen for that purpoſe by the Managers from 1729. This ſelection had given great offence to the other Surgeons. But the Managers at that time, ſteady to their purpoſe, promiſed in their petition, and had it inſerted in their charter, that the poor ſick were to be taken care of by *ſome of the moſt ſkilful Chirurgeons*. This irreſiſtibly implies two things, both of which are ſelf-evident at any rate, and both of which it is much to the preſent purpoſe to attend to very ſtrictly.

Firſt, It implies, that, of the Surgeons of Edinburgh, ſome may be *more* and others *leſs* ſkilful. This, I preſume, many people would very readily believe without the evidence, either of a ghoſt, or of a Royal Charter: for this reaſon, among others, that it is generally known to be the caſe with the individuals of many different profeſſions; very remarkably among lawyers and wig-makers, ſhoemakers and tailors, milliners, cooks, fiddlers, dancing-maſters, poſtillions, and phyſicians.

Secondly, It implies, what moſt people, indeed all that ever I heard of, except *one ſet* of our predeceſſors in this truſt, would conſider as ſelf-evident, that it *was*, and *is*, and *ever muſt be*, the *right* and the *duty* of the Managers, out of the great number, forty or more, of the Surgeons of Edinburgh, to chooſe and appoint *ſome of the moſt ſkilful* to take care of the ſick poor in the Infirmary. I conceive that every ſet of Managers were *legally bound* to do this, to the beſt of their knowledge, information, and belief, by their oath *de fideli adminiſtratione*, which all of them are by the charter obliged to take before they can act as Managers. That oath ſurely relates to the faithful care of the ſick,

ſick, and the *duty* to them befitting the Managers, as much as to the due and faithful care and adminiſtration of the funds of the Hoſpital: for to that end and purpoſe the corporation was erected, and the Hoſpital and its funds are abſolutely deſtined.

Acting under that charter, and having taken that oath, the Managers ſurely could have no legal right to violate the charter itſelf, by violating one of the expreſs conditions and purpoſes for which it was granted. They ſurely could have no more right or power to annul one clauſe or condition of their charter, than to annul the whole of it; or to inſert a new clauſe in it; or to give themſelves, by their own authority, a totally new charter.

I doubt whether in ſtrict law, whatever excuſe or juſtification they might have had in equity, they could have violated the condition of their charter, and expreſs *promiſe* and original *deſign* of their inſtitution, even for a *good* purpoſe.

I am no lawyer: but I know, to my ſorrow, by a ſimilar inſtance, in which, by my profeſſion and ſtation, I am particularly intereſted, that any condition or limitation in the charter of a corporation is held ſo valid in law, as to be deemed almoſt or quite indefeaſible.

The Royal College of Phyſicians in Edinburgh has its charter clogged with a moſt unfortunate limitation, a *ſalvo jure* of all the four Univerſities of Scotland: or rather the *five;* for there are *two* Univerſities in Aberdeen, as there are in England. Of courſe, any man who has a diploma of Doctor of Medicine from St Andrew's, Glaſgow, Aberdeen, or Edinburgh, is, *ipſo facto*, entitled to have a licence from our College, to practiſe phyſic in Edinburgh, without any previous examination or trial. This right is always ſet forth in the formal petition for a licence from our College, by every Phyſician who has a diploma from a Scotch Univerſity: and it cannot be diſputed.

But

But it is alſo true in fact, that ſome gentlemen, who have ſtudied, or pretended to ſtudy, phyſic, in the Univerſity of Edinburgh, and who, on being examined by the Profeſſors of medicine here, have been found groſsly ignorant, and been remitted to their ſtudies, have immediately afterwards obtained the diploma of M. D. from ſome other Scotch Univerſity. One unlearned gentleman, whoſe head ſeems to have been ſomewhat longer than uſual, had the wiſdom to provide himſelf with ſuch a diploma, (value L. 14, or thereabouts), before he allowed the Edinburgh Profeſſors of phyſic to examine him, having, I preſume, got juſt knowledge enough of phyſic, to know that he knew nothing about it, and that poſſibly the Profeſſors would find that out when they examined him.—This gentleman had the goodneſs to write and publiſh a pamphlet, and one of the others took the trouble to publiſh a large octavo volume, abuſing the Edinburgh Profeſſors for what they had done: which publications, of courſe, completely juſtified the Profeſſors.

But they would not have juſtified the College of Phyſicians, in refuſing the young Doctors, the authors of them, a licence to practiſe phyſic in this city, if they had applied for ſuch licence. We could not, even to do a thing clearly expedient, and equitable in itſelf, have violated that clauſe of our charter which ſecured the previouſly exiſting rights of all the Scotch Univerſities.

As little, I ſhould think, could the Managers of the Infirmary legally break the promiſes in their petition, and violate the conditions ſpecified in their charter, even for a *good* purpoſe; and ſtill leſs, if poſſible, could they do ſo for a *bad* purpoſe. By a *good* purpoſe, here, I mean ſomething that tended to make the condition of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital *better*, and their chance of ſafety, relief, and complete recovery, *greater*, than it was before. By a *bad* purpoſe, here, I mean any thing that tended to make

 their

their condition *worſe*, and their danger, their fears, their ſufferings, and their miſery, on the whole *greater*, and their chance of relief or complete cure, *leſs*, than it was before.

For example, on the principle juſt now ſtated, if the Royal College of Phyſicians had choſen to diſpute the point with them, I do not believe the Managers could legally have ouſted them of their *right*, coeval with the inſtitution, and eſtabliſhed expreſsly in the charter, of being all of them Phyſicians to the Infirmary; nor conſequently could the Managers have appointed (without the conſent and acquieſcence of our College) two ordinary attending phyſicians to do permanently the hoſpital duty. But the phyſicians were too wiſe, and knew too well the duty, the object, the very delicate nature, and the real dignity of their profeſſion, to diſpute that point with the Managers, after it became fully evident that it would be *much better* for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital to be taken care of by a very few of them permanently, than by all of them promiſcuouſly in rotation.

As little, ſurely, or leſs, if poſſible, could the Managers at any time be entitled legally to violate their charter, or any expreſs ſtipulation or condition in it, or promiſe on their part in their petition praying to have ſuch a charter, for a *bad* purpoſe, inconſiſtent with the very plan and terms of their inſtitution, by committing the care of the ſick poor in the Infirmary,—not, as they had *promiſed* in their petition, and as the public at large, and chiefly the ſick poor, had a ſtrong intereſt, and a *chartered right*, to expect and require, to *ſome of the moſt ſkilful chirurgeons;* but, indiſcriminately to the *moſt ſkilful* and the *leaſt ſkilful* of them, on a ſyſtem of *rotation* abſurd almoſt beyond belief or comprehenſion, and pregnant with *endleſs* miſchief.

Yet this has been done, by one ſet of Managers, more than ſixty years ago; and the evil, great from the firſt, has increaſed, is increaſing, and ought to be removed.

No

No perſon in the leaſt acquainted with the ways of men, will ever ſuppoſe that ſo groſs and plain a *wrong* was done for nothing. Bad as mankind may be thought, the worſt of them will hardly do a great wrong to others, who had never injured or offended them, and who, in their utmoſt miſery, had been entruſted to their charitable care, without ſome ſtrong inducement: And every perſon, of competent underſtanding, and knowledge of the world, will gueſs with confidence, that ſo monſtrous an evil could ſpring from no other root, but that *one* which has moſt juſtly and emphatically been termed the root of all evil, *Money*, *Money;* whoſe magic power has ſometimes made Juſtice ſee, and often has made men blind who ſaw the cleareſt; which once made *Demoſthenes* almoſt ſpeechleſs; and which every day perverts the ſtrongeſt judgment, and ſometimes even leads aſtray a benevolent and upright heart.

Such, I ſeriouſly believe, was the caſe in this inſtance. At leaſt the fact is certain, that one ſet of Managers, whoſe general character for integrity, benevolence, and public ſpirit, was unqueſtionable, forgetful of their firſt and ſacred duty to the ſick poor entruſted to their charitable care, and regardleſs of their oath *de fideli*, deliberately did that great evil, for *Money;* not money for their own private uſe, but money to increaſe the public fund of the Hoſpital.

The hiſtory of that *curious* tranſaction is well known to the Managers and to the Surgeons: it is fully recorded in the minutes of both corporations; and there can be no diſpute about it. There is no occaſion to detail it minutely here: I ſhall have frequent occaſion to refer to it in the ſequel of this Memorial. It is of much more importance to ſtate what the conſequences of it have been, and are at this day.

It would be little to the purpoſe here, little to my own credit, very little to the ſatisfaction of the Managers, ſtill leſs to the gra-

tification of the public, and leaſt of all to the benefit of the ſick poor, who at preſent are, or hereafter may be in the Hoſpital, to have ſtated what are the terms, the ſpirit and purpoſe, and the primary condition of our charter: It would even be little to have eſtabliſhed, that ſuch a charter, or condition or clauſe in it, or ſuch a ſpecific promiſe on the part of the original ſubſcribers and founders of the Hoſpital, referred to in the charter, is indefeaſible by the Managers acting under the charter, and not to be ſet aſide by any authority known in this country leſs than that of an act of parliament: All theſe things, however completely effected, would avail nothing, and probably would not even induce the Managers, certainly ought not to induce them, to try to enforce by law their original charter, and ſet aſide, as illegal and incompetent, a tranſaction for money, (which of courſe muſt be refunded), and a formal bargain, inconſiſtent with our charter; unleſs it be alſo ſhewn that the tranſaction has been *very bad* for the Hoſpital, in its primary object and moſt eſſential intereſt; I mean, the proper care of the ſick poor admitted into it.

Till this is done, the Managers can have no *great* intereſt, and no *honourable* or reaſonable motive for trying the queſtion. They would even have ſtrong reaſons for not bringing it to a public diſcuſſion; I mean, that the tranſaction alluded to is little to the credit of their predeceſſors in this truſt. And though, for other conſiderations, we ſhould be entitled to bring the queſtion to trial, and to obtain a deciſion in our favour on the ſtrict principles of law; yet we ſhould be heard, even in court, with ſome diſtruſt and diſapprobation; and we ſhould certainly incur, and, what is worſe, we ſhould richly deſerve, the indignation, inſtead of the gratitude of the public, and the reproaches of the ſick poor admitted into the Hoſpital, if we availed ourſelves of a ſtrict point of law, to enforce a right which was *bad* for them, or to ſet aſide

a tranſaction which experience had proved to be for their eſſential benefit.

It is incumbent on me therefore to ſhew, that, as Managers of the Hoſpital, we are guardians of the health and lives of the ſick poor admitted into it; and that, in this view, we have the ſtrongeſt intereſt and moſt cogent reaſons for wiſhing to enforce our legal chartered right; and for demanding, that a tranſaction, inconſiſtent with that right, and cruelly bad for the ſick poor, ſhall be annulled.

This I take to be the equity of the caſe; on which, juſt as much as on the point of ſtrict law, we muſt reſt our cauſe. Far from wiſhing to keep it out of view, or to ſhrink from the moſt public and rigorous diſcuſſion of it, I wiſh to bring it forward, to place it in the cleareſt light, to ſtate it ſtrongly, and to illuſtrate it fully.

It is in this way that I have the vanity to think I may be of ſome uſe.

I know that I am totally unable to argue a point of law. I know that I cannot argue even a point of equity, as a lawyer would do. I know that I cannot make the moſt of thoſe ſtrong and obvious conſiderations of natural juſtice, and humanity, and good faith, and expediency, and common ſenſe, which this caſe ſo amply affords. That muſt be the buſineſs of an experienced and able lawyer.

But, on the other hand, I know that the diſcuſſion of this caſe, on principles of equity, involves the knowledge and conſideration of many facts and circumſtances, quite foreign to the habits and the thoughts of lawyers, which the office and duties of my own profeſſion, and near thirty years intimate acquaintance with this Hoſpital, have made familar to me.

Many of theſe particulars are ſo intimately blended with the principles of the equity of the caſe, as to be almoſt or quite eſ-

ſential

ſential to it. Even the conſideration of the cloſe affinity between the duty befitting the managers of an hoſpital towards the ſick poor admitted into it, and the profeſſional duty of phyſicians and ſurgeons to the ſame ſick poor, when *their* patients, may deſerve the moſt ſerious attention. The two duties appear to me ſo near akin, as to differ chiefly, or ſolely, in this reſpect, that in point of common ſenſe, and good faith, and natural juſtice, the former (the Managers) are bound to *procure*, what the latter (Phyſicians and Surgeons) are bound to *do*, for the ſick poor entruſted to their care. Both duties appear to me *indefeaſible* and *ſupreme;* that is, *ſuperior* to all conſiderations of intereſt or conveniency that *can be* put in competition with them.

If I can explain and illuſtrate theſe things to the conviction of men not lawyers, and who perhaps never thought of them before, I may do ſo to the conviction of lawyers alſo: or at leaſt I may have the good fortune to furniſh them ſome new information of curious particulars, and ſome materials, or hints, of which they will know, much better than I can do, how to avail themſelves.

If, in this good cauſe, I can do the humble, but neceſſary, office of the bellows-blower to the organiſt, which I think not impoſſible, my wiſhes will be amply gratified.

As a Manager of the Infirmary, I can have no wiſh, and if I had the wiſh, I have not the power, to renounce or give up one iota of its legal rights on any occaſion, and leaſt of all on ſo intereſting an occaſion as the preſent.

But, as an upright man, wiſhing to act fairly and openly to all concerned, wiſhing to reaſon ſtrictly, but candidly, in the conduct of my argument, wiſhing, in ſhort, to reaſon and act in ſuch a manner, that all upright, intelligent, and candid men ſhall be convinced by my argument, and approve of my conduct, I have no objection to ſtate and argue our caſe as it *would have*

ſtood

ſtood if there had been *no ſuch clauſe* in our charter as I have ſtated, and believe deciſive as to our *legal right.*

I ſhall *ſuppoſe*, that in our charter not one word had been ſaid of *the Royal College of Phyſicians in Edinburgh*, or of *ſome of the moſt ſkilful Chirurgeons.* I ſhall ſuppoſe that our charter had erected this corporation for the purpoſe of managing an Hoſpital wherein ſick poor were to be entertained and taken care of by phyſicians and ſurgeons: or ſtill more generally and briefly, an Hoſpital for the cure or relief of ſick poor; and that our powers (by the charter) had been limited to ſuch " *things conſiſtent with* " *the laws of the realm, as may beſt conduce to the charitable end* " *and purpoſe above mentioned.*"

This I conceive to be the moſt honourable and liberal way of ſtating the caſe, to which no perſon can reaſonably object.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that any perſon can be ſo irrational or ſo ſhameleſs, as to maintain, that we, acting under ſuch a *ſuppoſed* charter, could legally and effectually do any thing, and leaſt of all make a perpetual bargain, not only *not conducive* to the charitable end and purpoſe for which this corporation was erected, but directly *inconſiſtent* with it, and undeniably *very bad* for the patients.

Now, even in this view of the caſe, I think it may be ſhown, on principles of natural juſtice, humanity, and common ſenſe, enforced in ſome reſpects by certain medical conſiderations, that the tranſaction and bargain which I reprobate muſt be ſet aſide.

It is evident, that this is not to be done by ſpecifying any particular inſtances of negligence, unſkilfulneſs, or incapacity in individual ſurgeons, who, by virtue of that bargain, and in violation of the clauſe in our charter, have taken care of the ſick poor in the Infirmary.

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If a dozen ſuch inſtances were proved inconteſtably, they could lead to no fair concluſive *general* inference againſt the bargain, but only to certain inferences with reſpect to thoſe ſurgeons individually. It might be ſaid, and very properly it would be ſaid, Let thoſe individuals, according to the circumſtances of their reſpective caſes, be admoniſhed, or cenſured, or inſtructed, or, if found abſolutely incorrigible, let *them* be forbidden to take care of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital: but let the general ſyſtem of promiſcuous attendance in rotation, as eſtabliſhed by the bargain, ſtill ſtand good.

It never can be the intereſt or the wiſh of the Managers to enter on ſuch painful and needleſs diſcuſſions, or to bring to public view misfortunes which ought never to be known. Nor are they entitled to conſider as *faults*, what in candour, and even in ſtrict juſtice, ſhould be regarded only as *misfortunes*. It is not the *fault* of a youth of four-and-twenty, juſt going to begin the practice of his profeſſion, that he has not all the ſkill, and uſeful experience, and manual dexterity, of a ſurgeon fifty years of age, who has had very extenſive practice for twenty years. It is the *fault* of that execrable ſyſtem, eſtabliſhed by a ſordid bargain, which gives to every ſuch youth who is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, that right of attendance in the Hoſpital, which, on every principle of expediency, and humanity, and natural juſtice, and common ſenſe, as well as by the expreſs terms of our charter, ought to be given only to ſome of the moſt ſkilful of them. Nay more, that ſyſtem *indirectly* obliges the youngeſt, the moſt inexperienced, and who muſt therefore be preſumed the leaſt ſkilful, to undertake that nice and arduous taſk; while it leaves the moſt experienced and ſkilful at liberty, and even affords them a ſtrong inducement, to decline it. Theſe may decline it without injury to their own well-eſtabliſhed character; even their great occupation in private practice may be an excuſe for doing ſo;

while

while their prudent reluctance to riſk their own character, by taking any ſhare in a ſyſtem which they know to be bad, and by which they have much to loſe and nothing to gain, is a ſtrong motive for withdrawing from it. But a young ſurgeon, rather wiſhing to begin than actually beginning the private practice of his profeſſion, may naturally wiſh to have an opportunity of performing on the ſick poor in the Hoſpital all the operations of ſurgery, not one of which he had performed before. He may think it a good piece of education in his profeſſion. At any rate, he cannot decline to attend in his turn, without ſeeming to acknowledge ſome conſciouſneſs of his own inferiority to his profeſſional brethren who are eager to undertake the ſame taſk.

Nor could the Managers propoſe by any ſuch enquiries into things paſt, to rectify any evils that have been done. Their only rational object in this caſe, is to prevent the continuance or repetition of ſuch evils in future.

This, it is evident, can be done only by ſhewing plainly and fully the nature and greatneſs of the evils *inevitably* and *neceſſarily* proceeding from the promiſcuous attendance of the ſurgeons by rotation; which evils conſequently cannot be removed while that *ſyſtem* is allowed to continue. Theſe alone are the evils of it to which I allude, to which I have peculiarly turned my attention, and which I undertake to explain, and, if required, to *prove*, in their fulleſt extent.

I will own that I have another view in ſtating, very particularly and ſtrongly, thoſe evils, and in ſhewing whence they neceſſarily proceed.

For certain reaſons, which will appear in the ſequel of this Memorial, I have the vanity to think, that, by ſo doing, I may make a ſtrong and favourable impreſſion on many of thoſe who perhaps at preſent believe that they have an intereſt and a right adverſe to

ours, and to what we reckon eſſential to the proper care of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital.

I think the caſe may be ſtated to them fairly, and yet ſo ſtrongly, on the general principles of natural juſtice, humanity, and common ſenſe, that, if there were not in this Iſland a court that could enforce the principles of law or equity, ſtill they would find that they could gain neither honour nor advantage, but quite the contrary, by inſiſting on their bargain.

If I can ſucceed in this attempt, I ſhall both accelerate the good which I have in view, and alſo ſave the Managers the trouble and expence of litigation.

I know what happened formerly at different times when this queſtion was agitated; but I am not diſcouraged. Many circumſtances of the caſe are now greatly changed. The example of the College of Phyſicians, which at one time was the ſtrongeſt argument in favour of the bargain with the Surgeons, is now directly and ſtrongly againſt it.

Uniform and ample experience for more than ſixty years, has fully ſhewn how bad the ſyſtem in queſtion has been for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital; and how unavailing even for that purpoſe which the ſurgeons, who after a hard ſtruggle got it eſtabliſhed, had moſt at heart. Above all, I truſt to the more liberal and honourable ſentiments, and more enlarged and juſt views of the ſubject, which now prevail among the ſurgeons themſelves, as well as among others who have an intereſt in it. I know for certain, that many of them think on this point juſt as I do; and I truſt that all of them will do ſo when they attend to it ſtrictly. I know there has been ſo great a change in the ſentiments and manners of the more reſpectable inhabitants of this city within theſe ſeventy years, at which time this queſtion was firſt agitated, that thoſe conſiderations which the ſurgeons openly avowed, and ſtated as the ſtrongeſt arguments in their favour, cannot now be avowed; and, if avowed, would be re-

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ceived with honeſt and keen indignation. Of theſe obſolete arguments, a ſhort ſpecimen is given in the ſequel of this Memorial; and a very ſhort one, I am ſure, will ſuffice.

I know alſo what is commonly ſaid of corporations, that they have neither ſhame nor conſcience; and that many men, united in a corporation, will do things without ſcruple or remorſe, at which as individuals they would have ſpurned with indignation. But this I do not implicitly believe, and I am ſure it is not univerſally true.

I know very well that a Royal Charter can never confer either moral virtues or intellectual endowments; but as little can it take them away.

I know well, that on a ſimilar occaſion, fifty years ago, that corporation over which at preſent I have the honour to preſide, waved its indiſputable legal right, and acted juſt as liberally and honourably as any individual member of it could have done in the ſame circumſtances.—I can ſee no phyſical or moral obſtacle to the ſurgeons behaving juſt as well at preſent.

This may be thought precarious. Be it ſo. There can be no harm in making the experiment. Lawyers have long ago determined, that *Superflua non nocent*. Our chance of ſucceſs, in that experiment, will not be the leſs, that thoſe on whom it it is tried, know beforehand that we have law and equity on our ſide.

And when this Memorial ſhall be laid on the table in Surgeons Hall, and five and forty ſcalpels, ſharper than razors, ſhall be drawn at once to diſſect it to the bone, the operators will not be leſs cautious or ſkilful in their buſineſs, for knowing that it has been reviſed by counſel learned in the law.

SECTION II.

BEFORE I attempt to ſhow the greatneſs of the evil *neceſſarily* reſulting from the pernicious ſyſtem of all the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons having a right to attend in the Hoſpital promiſcuouſly by rotation, it is proper to ſtate what uſe they actually make of that right: elſe it might be ſaid that I was conſidering not real but only imaginary or poſſible evils, which were to be dreaded from it; but which in fact were either totally prevented or greatly leſſened, by the humane, prudent, and delicate uſe which the ſurgeons made of ſo dangerous a right.

The fact is, as the Managers may be convinced in a moment, by peruſing the liſt of the ſurgeons who have attended in the Hoſpital by rotation during the laſt three years, that though all of them *claim*, all of them do not chooſe to *exerciſe* that right. But many of them do rigorouſly avail themſelves of it: chiefly the junior members of their college; all of whom, to the number of ſeventeen, counting upwards from the bottom of the liſt, who reſided in Edinburgh, did attend and operate in the Royal Infirmary, in the laſt rotation or ſucceſſion, each for two months at a time. Of the *ſeventeen* juniors, from Mr Lawſon to Mr George Bell incluſive, only *four* have not attended in their turn; namely, Mr Lawſon, who is ſurgeon to a regiment in a diſtant part of England; Mr Charles Anderſon, whoſe ſituation is the ſame with Mr Lawſon's; Dr William Niſbet, who is ſettled in London; and Dr William Farquharſon, who has now retired to the country. To make up for theſe *four* not reſident in Edinburgh, there were at the end of laſt year *five* more Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons whoſe names come after that of Mr George

George Bell (the preſent attending ſurgeon: March, 1800.) Their time of attendance in ſucceſſion will extend to ten months, that is, till the 1ſt March 1801. Before that time probably three or four more will be on the liſt, implying the attendance of the junior ſurgeons in the Hoſpital in ſucceſſion for three or four years without interruption.

But *many*, indeed *moſt* of the ſenior members of that reſpectable body, men of the higheſt eminence in their profeſſion, in whoſe character, and judgment, and knowledge, and attention, and ſkill, and dexterity in the important article of chirurgical operations, the public has the greateſt confidence, have withdrawn themſelves from that public, honourable, and charitable duty.

Of the *three-and-twenty* ſenior Fellows of the College of Surgeons, counting downwards from the top of the liſt, only *four* have attended in the courſe of the laſt rotation. Theſe four were, Mr Ruſſel, Mr Wardrope, Mr Arrot, and Mr Latta.

This non-attendance of many of the moſt experienced and moſt eminent of the ſurgeons began long ago, but has increaſed very much of late: and though a very great evil in itſelf, and a groſs violation of the bargain with the Managers, at leaſt of the ſpirit and meaning of it, though not juſt of the terms of the contract, now paſſes unnoticed. But I have been informed, that when it firſt began, it was ſeriouſly taken notice of by the Managers, and complained of by them as a breach of the contract on the part of the ſurgeons. There can be no doubt that the Managers at leaſt, and, as I ſuſpect, the ſurgeons too, had no ſuch thing in view when they made the bargain.

The Managers will ſee, by their own minutes at different periods within theſe ſeventy years, that different plans have been propoſed to remedy, or at leaſt to leſſen, ſo great and ſtriking an evil. At firſt it was propoſed (by the ſurgeons themſelves) that an elder and a younger ſurgeon ſhould attend together: this, as might eaſily have

have been foreſeen, came to nothing. At another time the ſtrange, perplexed, expenſive, and equally unavailing ſyſtem, of *four ſubſtitute ſurgeons* attending along with thoſe in rotation, and inſtead of thoſe who declined to attend in their turn, was adopted; and after a full trial for many years, was given up as uſeleſs.—The ſyſtem of rotation being in itſelf fundamentally bad, may eaſily be made *worſe;* but never can be made *good;* nor even *better* than it was at firſt: and as to the various degrees of badneſs, all of them very great, which may take place in it, I cannot think they are worth diſputing, or taking any trouble about.

It is ſufficient for my preſent purpoſe to ſtate, that gradually it has come to this paſs, that the practice of ſurgery in the Royal Infirmary is *chiefly*, and for *two* or *three years* together is *entirely*, in the hands of the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced ſurgeons, each of them attending in his turn for two months at a time.

The reaſons which could induce ſo many of the ſenior ſurgeons, men of the greateſt worth, as well as profeſſional eminence, and ſtill in the vigour of life, to withdraw themſelves from a duty ſo honourable to themſelves, and ſo beneficial to the public, muſt have been ſtrong indeed, and muſt well deſerve the moſt ſerious attention of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary.

Thoſe reaſons are no ſecret: by ſome, who have acted in conformity to them, they have been avowed in the moſt open and honourable manner: and they perfectly coincide with and confirm many other conſiderations, more obvious, and, as I think, perfectly deciſive on the ſame point.

That ſyſtem, of all the ſurgeons of a great city, or all of them who pleaſe, attending and operating by rotation, appears to me ſo bad for the Hoſpital in its moſt eſſential intereſt, I mean the welfare of the ſick poor admitted into it, that I *ſeriouſly* doubt whether the ingenuity of man, if it had been ſo abſurdly employed on purpoſe, could have contrived a worſe; that is, one more unfavourable to the

the main end of ſuch an inſtitution, the relief and recovery of the poor and unfortunate, who from diſeaſe or accident required the care and attendance of ſkilful and experienced ſurgeons, and often the performing of the moſt difficult and dangerous chirurgical operations.

If my opinion on this ſubject were new, or ſingular though long formed, I ſhould not preſume at this time to obtrude it on the Managers. But for more than twenty years it has been my firm opinion; and during all that time I have frequently had occaſion to hear the ſame opinion ſtrongly expreſſed by many different perſons, *Students*, Profeſſors of medicine, Phyſicians, Surgeons, nay, even Managers of the Royal Infirmary; perſons well informed, and frequently eye-witneſſes of the evils reſulting from that ſyſtem which they agreed with me in condemning.

To moſt people it will appear very ſtrange that I ſhould quote ſtudents of phyſic as high and reſpectable authority on this point; which they may probably be thought too young and inexperienced, and ſcarce ſufficiently informed, to be able to judge of.

To the Managers of the Royal Infirmary in particular it may appear worſe than ſtrange, perhaps reprehenſible, and peculiarly unbecoming in me, to refer with any kind of reſpect to the opinion of the ſtudents on this ſubject; which opinion they uſed ſometimes to expreſs in a moſt indecent manner, by murmuring, and even hiſſing in the operation-room. The Managers will naturally think of the violent exploſion which happened there ſome years ago, and which required their interpoſition, and moſt ſerious animadverſion; eſpecially as one of the preſent Managers, (Mr Innes), and along with him the preſent Treaſurer of the Infirmary, (Mr Jardine), were the perſons who attended in the Theatre during an operation, ſoon after, to enforce the very proper orders of the Managers, for preventing ſuch indecent behaviour in the ſtudents, and excluding for ever from the Hoſpital any of them who

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ſhould be guilty of it on any pretence whatever. The *pretence* at that time, which, for good reaſons, was allowed to paſs as an excuſe, was, that the hiſſing complained of was not at the *operator*, but at the *aſſiſtants*, who intercepted the view of what was doing. That this was ſometimes the caſe, was certain; and it may have been wholly or partly the caſe that particular day of the great exploſion. But it was equally certain, and ſo notorious, as neither to be denied nor explained away, that ſuch indecent marks of diſapprobation were occaſionally beſtowed pretty freely on ſome of the operators, who appeared leſs dexterous than their brethren.

The Managers may be aſſured that I have no wiſh and no means to juſtify, or in any degree to excuſe, the behaviour of the ſtudents in that reſpect. It was in every point of view as bad as poſſible; diſgraceful to themſelves, moſt ſhocking to the unfortunate patients, and cruelly embarraſſing to the operator. I ſincerely hope that nothing like it ſhall ever again occur in the Hoſpital. I ſhould not at preſent have revived the memory of ſuch an unpleaſant occurrence, but for an important purpoſe: to repreſent to the Managers, that there muſt have been a great *fault* ſomewhere elſe, as well as among the ſtudents, that gave occaſion to ſuch conduct on their part.

So long ago as when I was a ſtudent, and, as ſuch, accuſtomed to attend in the operation-room, it was not uncommon for the ſtudents to beſtow very freely their marks of approbation or diſapprobation on different operators. Though I was not one of the offenders, I was ſitting among them one day when their behaviour in this reſpect was ſo bad, that it rouſed the indignation of a gentleman of the profeſſion, who is at preſent one of the Managers of the Infirmary; I mean Mr Alexander Wood, who very properly gave them a ſharp reprimand for their indecent conduct. This reprimand, which indeed was well merited, the ſtudents were wiſe enough to take in good part, and there was no more

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ſaid about it at that time. This muſt have been ſomewhere between twenty-ſix and thirty years ago; ſome fifteen or twenty years before the great exploſion, which of courſe almoſt obliterated the memory of all former leſs remarkable events of the ſame kind.

That I may not be miſunderſtood on this point, I muſt mention, that the indecent marks of diſapprobation, on the part of the ſtudents, which I witneſſed, were not beſtowed on Mr Wood himſelf. He was univerſally acknowledged to be an admirable operator; as the ſtudents were abundantly ready to teſtify, ſometimes rather in a tumultuous manner. He was that day attending as an aſſiſtant, or a *ſubſtitute*, according to the ſyſtem which at that time prevailed.

I think I remember who the operator was, but I am not quite ſure; and if I were, I ſhould not name him. But that the Managers may have ſome kind of notion what circumſtances gave occaſion to ſuch behaviour in the ſtudents, I will mention, that about the time to which I allude, I have repeatedly ſeen a ſurgeon operate in the Infirmary, whoſe hand ſhook ſo much, that every ſtudent who ſaw him, thought he ſhould ſcarce have undertaken to apply a plaſter or a bandage. Yet, with that grievous defect, I have ſeen him attempt a nice operation on the eye. This gentleman withal was a man of moſt reſpectable character, and great profeſſional ſkill. As a conſulting ſurgeon, he might have been very uſeful to the Hoſpital; but certainly he ought not to have appeared there as an operator. This the youngeſt ſtudent in the operation-room, provided only he were not blind, could not fail to perceive in three minutes.

I know enough of ſtudents of phyſic, and was long enough one myſelf, to be able to aſſure the Managers with perfect confidence, that though they may prevent the ſtudents from clapping or hiſſing in the operation-room, (which indecencies they certainly

ought for many reaſons to prevent), they never *can* hinder the ſtudents from judging of the real and comparative merits of the different ſurgeons, in their operations; from perceiving that ſome of the ſurgeons operate admirably well, others not; and from criticiſing very openly, and with more rigour than favour, every part of their practice; juſt as they do the practice of the ordinary phyſicians, and of the clinical profeſſors. If it were poſſible, which luckily it is not, it would be wrong to prevent in the young men the freeſt exerciſe of their own judgment.

But in truth I muſt ſay, however raſh or miſtaken in ſuch judgments, with reſpect to ſurgeons as well as phyſicians, they may ſometimes be, that many of the moſt pointed obſervations, and ſevereſt ſtrictures, that I have ever heard made on the abuſes to which I allude, have been from ſtudents, ſometimes in ſuch terms as I do not chooſe to remember, but withal of ſuch a tenor that there could be no diſpute about the juſtneſs of them. Many of the remarks to which I allude were made by young men peculiarly well qualified, and ſtrongly prompted to make ſuch obſervations, ſome of them having been previouſly bred regularly to ſurgery, and even having been engaged in the practice of it, as ſurgeons or aſſiſtant ſurgeons in the army or navy; and others having juſt before attended the London Hoſpitals, chiefly with a view to the practice of ſurgery; and who, on coming to Edinburgh, to complete their medical education, naturally attended much to the management of the chirurgical department of this Hoſpital, and were irreſiſtibly led to make compariſons, very little to the credit of thoſe concerned in it.

While I ſtate this ſtrongly, though not ſo ſtrongly as it has ſeveral times been ſtated to me, I beg it may not be ſuppoſed that I mean to admit or contend for that vaſt ſuperiority of London ſurgery and London ſurgeons which they are pleaſed to arrogate to themſelves. But I muſt contend ſtrongly for a ſelf-evident and

very

very important truth, eſtabliſhed by ample experience, but which might have been foreſeen without experience, that, every thing elſe being equal, the practice of ſurgery in an hoſpital conducted on the ſyſtem unfortunately eſtabliſhed in this, *muſt be* greatly worſe than the practice of ſurgery in an hoſpital where the ſurgeons have a permanent appointment, and remain long in office.

In the great hoſpitals in London, and, ſo far as I know, in every city except Edinburgh, the attending ſurgeons are appointed during life and good behaviour, by the managers of the hoſpital. They are very generally men of the greateſt character and eminence in their profeſſion; men who, from firſt to laſt, have ſtaked their fame and fortune on their aſſiduous attention, on the knowledge and ſkill which they diſplay in their hoſpital-practice, and on the ſucceſs which attends every part of it, and eſpecially the operations which they perform. Many of them have perſevered in very regular attendance at their hoſpitals, and the moſt faithful diſcharge of their duty when there, for a great part of their lives, notwithſtanding their extenſive private practice, and the labours and entanglements inſeparably connected with it; till the approach of age and infirmities made them feel the propriety of reſigning their public and arduous charge to their younger brethren, whoſe ſtrength was more adequate to the taſk.

Such men, ſo eſtabliſhed, have time and opportunity, and what is at leaſt of as much conſequence, they have the ſtrongeſt poſſible inducements, to proſecute with increaſing ardour the ſtudy of their profeſſion; to learn what is doing, and what is propoſed by others in it; to adopt what is good, and with due caution to try what appears rational and promiſing; in ſhort, to improve themſelves in every part of their buſineſs; and not only to become dexterous operators, but expert in the medical and chirurgical treatment of ſeveral diſeaſes, ſo as to prevent the neceſſity of many an opera-

tion, which in leſs ſkilful and practiſed hands would be unavoidable.

Every improvement which ſuch a ſurgeon acquires in the courſe of many years is gained to the hoſpital in which he continues to practiſe and to operate; it is gained to the poor and unfortunate who are admitted into it; it is gained to the ſtudents who attend it, and who ſee and learn his practice; and by the inſtruction of his pupils, as well as by his own practice, both in the hoſpital and in private, it is ſoon diffuſed, and gained to the public at large.

Moreover, ſuch a ſurgeon, in the courſe of his attendance in an hoſpital, has opportunities of obſerving many defects or errors in the general ſyſtem of management, with reſpect to the patients in his department; has time to conſider how they may beſt be ſupplied or corrected; to propoſe plans of improvement, and to get theſe introduced, and fairly tried and adopted. This is always an ungracious taſk, and a work of much time and labour; foraſmuch as it never fails to meet with ſtrong oppoſition, from the force of habit, the prejudices, the pride, the lazineſs, and the obſtinacy of thoſe who muſt execute the plans propoſed.

The difference between the ſituation of a few ſurgeons ſo eſtabliſhed in an hoſpital, and that of any number attending in rotation or ſucceſſion for two months at a time, ſuppoſing their natural talents, their previous education, and the profeſſional knowledge which they had acquired when they began their attendance, to be equal, is ſuch as not to admit of any rational compariſon, whether we conſider it with a view to the improvement of the practitioners themſelves, the benefit of the patients in the hoſpital, or the improvement of the art of ſurgery, and the good of the public and of mankind.

It would be indelicate at leaſt, and might even be thought illiberal,

ral, if not malevolent, to attempt to ſtate the contraſt very minutely and ſtrongly.

I cannot even preſume to offer a few remarks on the diſadvantages of the ſyſtem unfortunately adopted in this Hoſpital, though the moſt general in their nature, and the moſt indiſputable as to their juſtneſs, without premiſing, that I have no intention to propoſe any enquiry as to particular inſtances of negligence or miſmanagement, and no wiſh that any thing ſhould be ſtated, and certainly nothing ſhall be ſtated by me, that either directly or indirectly can in the ſmalleſt degree affect the profeſſional character, or hurt the feelings of any individual. Such particular enquiries and diſcuſſions can do no good; they cannot fail to do harm, by leading to endleſs diſputes and altercations. I know well that it is not only illiberal, but unreaſonable, and unjuſt in the higheſt degree, to cenſure a mode of practice as injudicious, becauſe other practitioners would not have followed it in the ſame circumſtances; to condemn it as bad and hurtful, becauſe it proved unſucceſsful; or to pronounce that a great operation was ill performed, becauſe it proved fatal. Nothing but the groſſeſt ignorance could account for ſuch dogmatical cenſures, and even ſuch ignorance would be no excuſe for the perſon who ſhould hazard them.

But fortunately, on the preſent occaſion, all ſuch minute enquiries, and all particular conſideration of the merits or demerits of any individual, are not only unneceſſary for the object which I have in view, but would evidently tend to fruſtrate my purpoſe. I ſhall therefore moſt carefully avoid them, and I truſt that no other perſon will introduce them in this diſcuſſion.

I take it for granted that no perſon will diſpute that a young and unpractiſed ſurgeon will acquire ſome improvement in the exerciſe of his profeſſion, by attending in an hoſpital, and treating ſuch patients in his department as are admitted; and by performing, probably for the firſt time in his life, ſuch operations as are required.

quired. It is avowedly for the ſake of this kind of improvement to all alike, that the Royal College of Surgeons have been anxious to have the right of attending and operating in this Hoſpital, open to all its members in rotation.

Any improvement that a young ſurgeon could get by attending and operating for two months, I ſhould think muſt be but inconſiderable; certainly very little compared to what he *might*, and with due attention on his part *would*, acquire by attending for ſix months, or for a twelvemonth, or ſtill better, for ſeveral years continually. To enable a young practitioner either in phyſic or ſurgery to obtain improvement by experience, it is not enough that a certain number of patients come under his care; he muſt have time to acquire the *habit*, the *facility*, the *readineſs* of attending to ſo many different caſes in quick ſucceſſion; of judging and acting, as we ſay, on the ſpur of the occaſion, and applying juſtly, and with preciſion, the general principles of phyſic or ſurgery to thoſe particular caſes.

Still more time, and leiſure, and habit, and the feeling of that eaſe which habit alone can give, are neceſſary to enable a practitioner to compare together a number of different caſes of the ſame diſeaſe, to try with due caution different modes of cure; and at any rate to obſerve with accuracy the progreſs of the diſeaſe, and the effects of the treatment employed, and to draw the proper inferences from all that he obſerves.

It is juſt the accumulation of many ſuch practical inferences from many particular caſes accurately compared together, and the facility and habit of applying that knowledge and the general principles of phyſic and ſurgery to particular inſtances, and in ſurgery the manual dexterity acquired by frequent repetition of operations, that conſtitute the great ſuperiority of a judicious, attentive, experienced practitioner, over a young man of equally good education, and equal, or even much better natural talents.

That

That kind of practice, and that great number and variety of cases, which occur at once, or in very quick succession, in an hospital, and which, after some time and habit, become the most instructive of all, are more apt at first to confound, and embarrass, and oppress a young practitioner, or even an old one, who is not accustomed to practise in such a situation.

I doubt much whether two months, or three times two months, can be sufficient to enable a young surgeon to get the better of that confusion and embarrassment, and acquire the habit of hospital-practice, or put him so much at his ease, that he can profit much, if indeed he can begin to profit, by what he sees or what he does.

But be his improvement more or less in the course of his two months attendance, at the end of that time it is lost to the Hospital for many months at least, probably for some years, perhaps for ever. Nay, it is in a great measure lost to himself: for what was acquired by habit, and depends on habit, will soon be lost by disuse, or the want of habit. But whatever become of the individual, and the improvement which he acquired in his two months attendance in the Hospital, it is plain at least that it cannot be transferred, like the gold chain of my Lord Provost, to his successor in office. *He* begins to attend and to operate just on purpose to acquire the same kind of improvement. Now that improvement which the one has got, and which the other wants to get, or the superiority of the one over the other, whose natural talents and education must be supposed equal to those of the former, at the end of the first two months, if it could be measured, and expressed accurately in language, would denote, with mathematical precision, the amount of the injury or the evil which the Hospital suffers by the change of the experienced for the inexperienced surgeon: an evil not to be compared to any pecuniary loss, and not to be compensated by any pecuniary advantage: for they are things incommensurable: it is injustice and cruelty to the patients, if done or permitted from any consideration but irresistible necessity.

An

An evil of the ſame kind, but incomparably leſs in degree, muſt from time to time occur in every hoſpital, from ſuch neceſſity, by the death or reſignation of the phyſicians or ſurgeons who are permanently appointed to it; unleſs care be taken to provide againſt the evil (as certainly ſhould be done) by the appointment of aſſiſtants or ſubſtitutes, who may be gradually and effectually trained to the duty of the hoſpital, and be able and ready on any vacancy to ſupply the places of their reſpective principals. This I believe is now generally, if not univerſally, done in all the great Hoſpitals of London, and in many other places.

But even though this very rational and eaſy precaution were neglected, and a perfect novice in hoſpital-practice, or in every kind of practice, for example, a youth of one and twenty years of age, who has juſt finiſhed his apprenticeſhip and his education, were appointed to ſucceed as eminent a ſurgeon as Mr Pott or Mr Hunter; though the evil would be great, it would be but tranſient; after a few months it would be every day growing leſs; and in a few years would no longer be felt, or ſuppoſed to exiſt. The young practitioner, if he was not deficient in natural talents, in the acquired preliminary knowledge of his profeſſion, and in aſſiduous attention to the duties of his office, which accompliſhments, though they cannot abſolutely be inſured by any mode of appointment, are to be preſumed at leaſt as much in the caſe of election as in that of rotation, might ſoon equal in ſkill and rival in fame his great predeceſſor.

By the ſyſtem of attending in rotation, that grievous evil is in ſome meaſure eſtabliſhed as a part of the inſtitution, and made perpetual; foraſmuch as thoſe who had attended once or twice before for the ſhort period of two months, and then were out of the habit of it for as many years, can neither have the knowledge, nor the habit of applying readily their knowledge, which thoſe would have who had been attending regularly during the whole of that time.

But

But a caſe is not only ſuppoſeable, but real, and which has already occurred, and muſt from time to time again occur, which ſhews the evil of that ſyſtem in all its horrors. The ſurgeon in attendance may be ſo for the firſt time; all his juniors, who come after him in the order of rotation, have never yet attended; but each of them in his turn is to undertake that arduous duty for the firſt time. According to the number of juniors, when the firſt of them begins his firſt attendance, that ſucceſſion may laſt a year or two; before the end of this period, three or four more ſurgeons may have finiſhed their apprenticeſhips and their ſtudies, and become Fellows of the Royal College, entitled to ſhare in all its rights and privileges, and very eager to avail themſelves of the privilege of attending and operating in this Hoſpital. By the time that their attendance is finiſhed, one or two or three more new members may have been added to the Royal College of Surgeons; and theſe in their turn muſt attend and operate here. Nor can this order be interrupted, or the ſuppoſed right of any of them with-held, by any different arrangement, without acknowledging the reality of that evil againſt which I remonſtrate.

Thus it muſt happen from time to time, that, for two or three years ſucceſſively, the practice of ſurgery in the Royal Infirmary ſhall be entirely in the hands of young and inexperienced practitioners, all of them in their turn attending and operating in it for the *firſt time*.

The magnitude of ſuch an evil needs no proof, and can admit of no exaggeration. Whether it be for half a century, or for half a year, or for ever, the evil is the ſame, not only in kind, but in degree; the difference is only as to its duration: and if the evil be very often repeated, though but for a ſhort time at once, it is in every reſpect almoſt as bad as if it were conſtant.

If, by any order of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, or by virtue of any compact between them and the Royal College of Sur-

geons, four or five of the members of the latter body were chosen by lot, or if the four or five youngest members of the College, without regard to any other consideration but that of their being the youngest, were appointed permanently surgeons to the Hospital, the absurdity, the injustice, and the cruelty of such a procedure would excite the most just and universal indignation. Common sense, and justice, and humanity, all require, that for so difficult and important a trust some selection should be made; and that some regard should be paid to the experience and to the personal and professional character, as well as to the education and station of the persons in whom that trust is reposed.

Yet that which, stated as a novelty, and as an imaginary case, in order to illustrate an argument, appears such a grievance and such an abomination as could never be endured, if it were actually done, would be a much less evil than that which has long been established, and which scarce attracts the attention of the public; for no other reason, I believe, but because it is established, and has long been familiar to them.

Let it be observed, that in the imaginary case of the most injudicious permanent appointment which I have stated, no individuals are supposed to be allowed to act as surgeons in the Royal Infirmary, but those who by the present establishment have the right, and avail themselves of the right of doing so. If they are qualified to act in that capacity for two months, they must be much better qualified to act in the same capacity for many months and many years.

Though it must at first view appear a most extravagant assertion, or a paradox, I have no doubt that, on the strictest examination, it will be found a serious truth, and one so plain as not to admit of dispute, that, if three men were chosen by lot out of the College of Surgeons, or if the three youngest Fellows were appointed, or if the three next to be admitted Fellows, young men not yet out of their apprenticeships, were appointed permanent Surgeons to the Hospital,

Hoſpital, the practice of ſurgery in it would in two or three years be on a much better footing than it has been for many years paſt. And it is plain at leaſt, that, at the beginning of ſuch a new eſtabliſhment, the practice could be no worſe than it will be when the ſame gentlemen attend in rotation; for it muſt be preciſely the ſame.

The imaginary caſe which I have ſtated may be brought much nearer to the real one, by ſuppoſing that the three junior Fellows who obtained the appointment of Hoſpital Surgeons were to hold it only as long as they were the three juniors, ſo as to enſure a ſucceſſion of the youngeſt always to fill that office. What on this ſuppoſition would be intuitively *very bad* for ever, muſt be *equally bad* for any number of months or years, during which it may and *muſt* take place according to the preſent ſyſtem.

To make any perſon not conſtantly in the habit of ſtrict and accurate thinking attend fully to a very familiar object, and perceive clearly all thoſe particulars about it which he was accuſtomed to overlook, and judge fairly of the importance of things which he had long regarded as of no moment; it is often neceſſary to place it in a new point of view, and in ſtrong and various lights. I ſhall endeavour to give one other illuſtration of the point in queſtion, which I truſt the Managers will ſee in the ſame point of view that I do.

They know in what manner the Phyſicians to the Hoſpital are appointed. They know well in what an exemplary manner the two preſent Phyſicians of it, Dr Hamilton and Dr Rutherford, have for many years diſcharged the duties of their important office. If, by their death or reſignation, the Hoſpital ſhould be deprived of their ſervices, it would moſt juſtly be regarded by the public, and more eſpecially by the Managers of the Infirmary, who beſt know the value of them, as a very great misfortune, and a loſs which could not ſoon or eaſily be ſupplied. To ſupply it,

however, as ſoon and as well as poſſible, two other Phyſicians to the Hoſpital would ſoon be appointed; moſt probably men who have been for ſome years engaged in the practice of their profeſſion, and who have already attained conſiderable reputation as Phyſicians, and whoſe perſonal character and conduct are known and eſteemed by the public. Perhaps, however, in conſequence of thoſe of my profeſſion who are ſomewhat advanced in life and much engaged in buſineſs declining ſuch an arduous taſk, or for other good reaſons, the Managers might make choice of two junior Fellows. In ſuch a Body as the College of Phyſicians, there can be no doubt, that among the junior as probably as among the ſenior Members, two men may be found, whoſe talents, education, and profeſſional knowledge, would render them unexceptionably fit to diſcharge the duty of Phyſicians of this Infirmary, to the ſatisfaction of the Managers, and with honour to themſelves, and advantage to the public. But ſurely neither the Managers, nor the public, nor the newly-appointed Phyſicians themſelves, (ſuppoſing them, as ought to be ſuppoſed, men of ſenſe), could believe them as able and expert in their Hoſpital-duty, for many months, or perhaps ſome years, as their predeceſſors had been. Without meaning in the leaſt to call in queſtion the merits of Dr Hamilton or Dr Rutherford when they ſeverally obtained the honourable appointment which they have long held, I muſt believe that they have improved greatly in the courſe of from ten to twenty-four years, and that they are ſtill improving; that they are better able to do their duty in the Hoſpital, and actually do it better now, than they did at firſt. To ſuppoſe otherwiſe would be no compliment to thoſe gentlemen, of whom, I am ſure, no perſon thinks more highly than I do.

The loſs of that kind of improvement to the Hoſpital on the death or retreat of an experienced Phyſician is inevitable, and though not irreparable, cannot inſtantly be repaired. But when the

the Managers take the beſt meaſures in their power to get the loſs ſupplied as ſoon as poſſible, in the way which I have here ſuppoſed, which for fifty years has uniformly been followed in this Hoſpital, and, ſo far as I know, in almoſt every other, they are not only free from every ſuſpicion of blame, but entitled to every praiſe, for the faithful diſcharge of their truſt.

The caſe would be widely different, if, on the event ſuppoſed, the death or retreat of the Phyſicians of the Infirmary, the Managers, departing from that rational and approved mode of proceeding, ſhould adopt a different ſyſtem, ſuch as I ſhall now ſtate.

I ſhall ſuppoſe that the Royal College of Phyſicians, knowing what kind of compact had been made ſixty and again thirty years ago, between the College of Surgeons and the Managers of the Infirmary, approving the plan and tendency of it, adopting in general, and in their fulleſt extent, all the motives which had induced the ſurgeons to make ſuch a bargain, and give ſuch a valuable conſideration to get the appointment of Surgeons to the Infirmary done away, and the right of attending in it by rotation extended to every Member of their College, and judging that it would be greatly for the honour of our College, and the perſonal advantage of its Members individually, to be on the ſame footing as the Surgeons at the Infirmary, had given the Managers of it L. 1000; in conſideration of which, a ſolemn contract was executed in all the needful or poſſible forms of law, by which the Managers appointed the whole Royal College Phyſicians to the Infirmary, expreſsly granting to every Fellow of it an equal right of attending and practiſing in the Infirmary in rotation for two months at a time, either by himſelf, or along with one or two other Fellows of the College, as ſhould be thought moſt expedient; in ſhort, completely reinſtating them, without the trouble and diſgrace of any litigation, in their original right as expreſſed in the Charter of the Infirmary.

It

It will be ſaid at once, that the Managers *would* never make ſuch a bargain, and *ought* not to make ſuch an one for any ſum of money that could be offered them. This indeed is abundantly plain, after the experience of the ſame kind of bargain with the ſurgeons. But it is not the queſtion. Suppoſing, however contrary to reaſon and probability, that the Managers did take the money and execute the contract; ſuppoſing further, to make the parallel as exact as poſſible, that many of the ſenior Fellows of the College of Phyſicians, men of eminence in their profeſſion, declined taking any ſhare in the buſineſs, and that the rotation ſoon came among the junior Fellows, with the certain proſpect of continuing among them for many months or years: in ſuch a ſtate of things, what would become of the utility of the Hoſpital? Of its high, and, I believe, very juſt reputation? Of the confidence of the public in the adminiſtration of it? Of the laſt hope and comfort in this world of the poor and unhappy, who reſort to it for relief under the accumulated preſſure of poverty and ſickneſs? I ſuſpect the general indignation and juſt reproaches of the public, for the public at large, and chiefly the poor and unhappy, not the Managers of the Infirmary, muſt be the ſufferers by ſuch a compact, would ſoon make both parties repent and be aſhamed of their bargain, and be equally deſirous to get rid of it.

I doubt even whether the keen indignation excited by ſuch a compact would allow time for any full and patient trial of the effects of ſuch a ſyſtem; for every perſon who has either the underſtanding or the feelings of a man, muſt foreſee as inevitable much more than enough completely to determine his judgment.

If it were propoſed to any the dulleſt of men, that themſelves, their children, and their families, when ſick, ſhould be attended indiſcriminately by all the Fellows of the Royal College of Phyſicians, in a pretty quick rotation, ſo that at the end of a certain month, and perhaps in the middle of a painful or dangerous diſeaſe, the phyſician

phyſician who at firſt attended them, and who was known and eſteemed by them, and who was treating the ſick tenderly, ſkilfully, and ſucceſsfully, ſhould ſuddenly diſappear, and be ſucceeded by another, whom the family had never ſeen, or perhaps had ſeen to their ſorrow, and thought they had good reaſon to diſlike and to dread; who perhaps held very cheap the opinion and the practice of his predeceſſor; who perhaps was eager to ſhow his own ſuperiority, and to reprobate the practice of the other; or who at leaſt thought it his duty, from his full conviction that the other was doing wrong, to follow a different practice, and to give his reaſons for doing ſo: Such a propoſal ſurely would excite horror rather than indignation, even in the moſt thoughtleſs and unfeeling.

Yet this is no more than what the patients under the care of the Surgeons in this Hoſpital are expoſed to ſuffer, once in two months, according to the preſent ſyſtem of rotation.

The pooreſt patients in the Hoſpital have the underſtanding, the feelings, and the rights of men. They know and feel, though they may not have words to expreſs it, that miſery is ſacred. They are *our* families, and *our* children, when *we* act as Managers of the Hoſpital: They have a right to *our* paternal care; they have a right to obtain from *us* the beſt aſſiſtance, and every relief and comfort which *we can* procure for them. That right in them is indefeaſible, and in point of importance it is ſupreme: without injuſtice to them, no other conſideration can ever be put in competition with it. *We* are not entitled to alienate it for money, or for any thing elſe: It is not *ours*.

Correſponding to what is their right is our duty; and we are not true to our truſt if we do not exert our utmoſt endeavours to diſcharge our duty in its utmoſt extent.

If our predeceſſors in this truſt have on any occaſion neglected their duty, and inadvertently waved a right which they could not renounce becauſe it was not theirs; it is our duty to reclaim and

make

make effectual that right, now that the evils are ſtrongly felt, and have long been felt, which reſult from the diſuſe or waving of it. We are the more eſpecially and loudly called upon to do ſo, as very ample experience concurs with reaſon to prove that the evils in queſtion are not accidental and tranſient, but permanent and increaſing, and the natural and inevitable conſequence of a pernicious ſyſtem, unhappily interwoven with this eſtabliſhment.

It is *incredible* that there ſhould be no remedy for ſo great an evil, no redreſs for ſo great a wrong; and that one raſh action or falſe ſtep of one ſet of Managers of this noble Inſtitution ſhould for ever bind their ſucceſſors to perſevere in injuſtice and cruelty, and half fruſtrate the benevolent purpoſe of this charitable Foundation.

Before we finally acquieſce in ſuch an opinion, and ſubmit, without hopes of relief, to ſuch an odious thraldom, which whether recent or old is equally bad, it is our duty to uſe our utmoſt endeavours to ſhake it off. We are not juſtified to ourſelves, to the public, to the poor and unhappy who are entruſted to our care, knowing what we do of the nature and greatneſs of the evil, if we do not at leaſt bring it to a trial, if neceſſary, before the higheſt court of juſtice in the kingdom.

If, after all, we ſhall be unſucceſsful in this attempt, which I think hardly poſſible, we ſhall at leaſt have the ſatisfaction and the credit of doing our duty: and what is more, we ſhall ultimately, though more ſlowly than I ſhould wiſh, gain our end in a different way.

By our making the attempt, the nature and greatneſs of the evil will become generally underſtood; our opinion of it, and our earneſt wiſh to remove it, will be made known; the origin of it, and the impediment to its removal, will be fully aſcertained; and it will appear by whoſe *fault* it is continued. Theſe things being once publicly known, the evil in queſtion, inveterate as it is, like

many

many others, will at laſt, and in no long time, produce its own cure.

It is not from general and ſpeculative reaſons alone, however irreſiſtible they may appear to me, and however generally I find them admitted by judges the beſt informed, the moſt candid, and in every reſpect the moſt unexceptionable, that I venture to expreſs myſelf ſo confidently as to the favourable reſult to be expected from ſuch a full diſcuſſion and general knowledge of the evil in queſtion, and of its cauſe. We have the moſt direct and deciſive experience of a caſe exactly in point.

The *very ſtrong caſe*, which I ſtated as purely imaginary, and hardly ſuppoſable even for the ſake of illuſtration and reaſoning, bears a very near and curious relation to the real matter of fact.

The experiment, which in ſtating that caſe I had only ſuppoſed, was actually tried with reſpect to the College of Phyſicians, but in the order of the two modes of attendance (by rotation or by permanent appointment) oppoſite to that which I had ſtated as the ſubject of a new experiment.

The fact is, (as ſtated p. 2.), that, by the original eſtabliſhment of this Infirmary, every member of the College of Phyſicians had a right to attend in rotation (which was monthly) and practiſe in this Hoſpital.

All who choſe, and, I believe, all the Fellows and Licentiates of the Royal College of Phyſicians, or with very few exceptions, did actually attend in their turn, for a month at a time, and practiſe as Phyſicians to this Infirmary, without fee or reward, according to the tenor of their original offer, when they began the ſubſcription for its eſtabliſhment.

This ſyſtem, which now, after fifty years experience of a different and a better one, appears to us abſurd at leaſt, if not inhuman, continued with very little alteration for almoſt *two-and-twenty years*, that is, from the 6th of Auguſt 1729, when the temporary hoſpital, which was occupied for ſome years while this noble

fabric was a-building, firſt was opened for the reception of patients, till the 28th of June 1751, when for the firſt time two ordinary Phyſicians to the Infirmary were permanently appointed. Theſe were, Dr David Clerk and Dr Colin Drummond, both of them young phyſicians; the former of whom I never ſaw, but I know he was a cotemporary of my father, and had taken his degree of M. D. in 1746. The latter, Dr Colin Drummond, was ſtill younger, and had taken his degree but a few months before he was appointed Phyſician to this Infirmary, viz. in 1750. Him I have often followed in this Hoſpital, and attended to his practice in the years 1770 and 1771.

But long before the year 1751, before even the foundation-ſtone of this Infirmary was laid, probably from the time that the ſyſtem of the phyſicians attending by rotation in the Hoſpital was tried, the evils of it were felt and complained of: For ſo early as December 1737, that is, in little more than *eight* years from the time that the *temporary* hoſpital was opened, the Managers publicly, and in very plain terms, expreſſed their ſenſe of the evil, and made an attempt, but unluckily a feeble and inadequate attempt, to redreſs it.

This was done at their meeting 19th December 1737, as appears by the Minute of it, which is in theſe words: "The Mana-" gers of the Infirmary being ſenſible of the inconvenience of ſo " many Phyſicians attending the Infirmary, do unanimouſly re-" ſolve, that the attendance be performed from and after the 1ſt " day of January next, (1738), by ſuch Phyſicians only as are " Fellows of the Royal College." At the ſame time the thanks of the Managers were returned to the Phyſicians for their paſt good ſervices, and the attendance of the Fellows of the Royal College in future was humbly deſired.

Even this firſt and feeble attempt to remove a notorious inconvenience, which tended only to exclude from attendance in this Hoſpital

Hoſpital the Licentiates of the College, was in part fruſtrated, becauſe it was thought to bear hard on two Phyſicians, Dr Macfarlane and Dr Martin, both of whom had attended in the Infirmary, but were only Licentiates, not Fellows of our College. They, taking umbrage at this excluſion, remonſtrated with the Managers, and obtained from them, at their meeting 14th January 1738, an exception in their favour, by virtue of which, they two individually and by name, were permitted to attend the Infirmary in rotation with the *Fellows* of the Royal College.

This very partial and inadequate reform of a great evil was all the variation made in the original ſyſtem till 1751, when a complete change of it, as already mentioned, was made at once; and what is peculiarly worthy of remark, it was made without the ſmalleſt ſtruggle, or oppoſition, or remonſtrance.

It ſhould ſeem, that by this time the inconvenience in queſtion, as well it might be after thirteen years longer experience of it, had been ſo ſeverely felt, and had become ſo well underſtood, that no body contended for it. It was not even ſtated as the ground of the procedure; and inſtead of it, a very polite *pretence* was ſubſtituted as the reaſon why the Managers appointed two permanent ordinary Phyſicians to the Hoſpital; namely, that the increaſing number of patients admitted into the Hoſpital, rendered the duty of attending it by rotation too burdenſome for the College of Phyſicians.

I take the liberty to call this a mere pretence, or oſtenſible reaſon, without any ſcruple: for it evidently was not meant to deceive. It is inconſiſtent with what paſſed before, and what paſſed afterwards. It is even inconſiſtent with itſelf, in one point of view, to ſuch a degree as to amount nearly to abſurdity. To men of ordinary underſtanding it ſhould ſeem almoſt ſelf-evident, that the Hoſpital-duty, great and laborious and increaſing as it might be ſuppoſed, could ſcarce be too much for the whole College of Phyſi-

cians, (twenty, or perhaps more), when two of the youngeſt members of the College were found willing to undertake it, and perfectly able to diſcharge it, with credit to themſelves and advantage to the Hoſpital and to the public.

At any rate, it is certain that no complaints had been made *of* the individual Fellows of the College of Phyſicians, for negligence, or inſufficiency in the diſcharge of their Hoſpital-duty; or *by* them, on account of the irkſomeneſs and increaſing labour of it: on the contrary, the thanks of the Managers were again given to them for their paſt good ſervices, and they were humbly requeſted to continue their attendance, either by monthly rotation, or in whatever other way they ſhould think beſt, once or twice a-week, *along with the ordinary Phyſicians*, and to give their advice and aſſiſtance to them when required. I need ſcarce add, that in Edinburgh, as in every other great town, there muſt always be abundance of phyſicians willing to act as ſuch to an hoſpital, either purely from motives of benevolence, or for the ſake of the improvement and reputation which they may acquire by their Hoſpital-practice.

The College of Phyſicians appear to have underſtood the Managers perfectly. When the unanimous reſolution of the Managers, appointing two permanent ordinary Phyſicians to the Infirmary, and requeſting the continuance of the ſervices of the College along with them, was officially notified to them, the Royal College behaved as became them, wiſely, liberally, and honourably. Far from urging any claim, or inſiſting on their indiſputable legal right, according to the terms of the Infirmary's charter, to attend by rotation as the only Phyſicians of the Hoſpital, they, (to uſe their own words), "Did moſt cheerfully agree to what was there-" by deſired, namely, to continue their good offices to the Infir-" mary, by appointing ſome of their number monthly by rota-" tion, or in what other way they think proper, to viſit the houſe

" once

" once or twice a-week, to give their advice and aſſiſtance to the " two ordinary Phyſicians, when they judge it neceſſary to apply " to them for the ſame."

In conſequence of this requeſt of the Managers of the Infirmary, and the correſponding reſolution and appointment of the College, which was gratefully accepted by the Managers, the members of the College continued for ſome time afterwards to attend the Infirmary in their monthly rotation. This practice has gradually fallen into diſuſe, for the moſt obvious and beſt reaſon in the world; that the two ordinary Phyſicians, being in the daily habit of Hoſpital-practice, and having daily opportunities of conſulting with one another, can have little or no occaſion to call for the aſſiſtance of their profeſſional brethren. But the offer of ſervice on the part of the College was never retracted, or declined on the part of the Managers, who had requeſted it; and to this hour it is underſtood that the ordinary Phyſicians of the Infirmary have a right to call for the profeſſional aſſiſtance of any *Fellow* of our College to their Hoſpital-patients, whenever they ſee occaſion; and that it is the duty of every *Fellow* of the College, when ſo required, to attend in the Hoſpital, and give his advice and aſſiſtance, without fee or reward.

This is one of the moſt curious and important facts in the hiſtory of the Infirmary, and it is the moſt to our preſent purpoſe. It ſhows in the cleareſt light the ſtrong ſenſe entertained by the Managers, at that time, either by their own direct means of knowledge, or by the information which they received from thoſe ſtill better qualified to judge in ſuch a queſtion, of the evils neceſſarily reſulting from the ſyſtem of rotation itſelf, without even the moſt diſtant alluſion to any *particular inſtances* of incapacity, miſconduct, or negligence. It ſhows likewiſe how completely a few years of additional experience, after the evil was firſt pointed out, had opened the eyes of all concerned, ſo as to preclude the poſſibility of any difference of opinion,

opinion, or any oppoſition to the requiſite change, even from leſs worthy motives.

Nor, from the nature of things, *can* the caſe ultimately be different with reſpect to the Surgeons, and their mode of attendance in the Infirmary. From the hour when it is made a ſubject of public and ſerious attention and frequent diſcuſſion, that magic ſpell, the force of habit, by which alone it ſubſiſts in defiance of reaſon and humanity, will be broken; the more it is examined, the more even it is defended and maintained, the worſe it will appear; till at laſt it will be ſhameful to contend for it, and no individuals and no ſet of men will find either pleaſure or pride, or honour or advantage, in the continuance of it.

Truth is mighty, and will prevail, whenever it is fairly attended to. It is our buſineſs and our duty, and it cannot be a difficult matter, to procure attention to that intereſting truth, of which we are all alike convinced, and of which we wiſh to convince others.

As ſoon as this is done, the evil will ſoon be removed; and, without the gift of prophecy, we may foreſee, that by the time that one or two generations have paſſed away, it will appear incredible that ſo bad a ſyſtem as that at preſent eſtabliſhed ſhould ever have been tolerated or thought of: it may even be neceſſary, for the ſatisfaction of curious enquirers yet unborn, to eſtabliſh the truth of ſo ſingular and marvellous a fact, by reference to our authentic records; juſt as on the preſent occaſion I have done with reſpect to the former mode of attendance of the Phyſicians of this Infirmary.

I muſt alſo beg leave to point out, that not only every conſideration and argument, which, in point of *expediency*, or, in plainer Engliſh, in point of humanity, and juſtice to the patients, made it undeniably right to change the mode of attendance of the Phyſicians from frequent rotation to permanent appointment, is applicable in its full force to the Surgeons and their attendance; but further,

further, that there is another very ſtrong reaſon with reſpect to the Surgeons, which is not applicable to the Phyſicians.

Many important qualifications and accompliſhments, it is evident, muſt be equally neceſſary to phyſicians and ſurgeons, to enable them to practiſe their reſpective arts any where, but, above all, to enable them to practiſe them in a great hoſpital, with credit to themſelves and advantage to the public.

For example, competent underſtanding, and maturity of judgment, and a complete and regular education in their reſpective profeſſions, and the general knowledge of the principles of the art which they mean to practiſe; which general knowledge may be acquired from books and lectures, and ſeeing the practice of phyſic or ſurgery, and may be ſhewn in the moſt ſatisfactory manner, (as commonly is done), by undergoing a proper examination, and the habit of applying quickly, and readily, and judiciouſly, thoſe general principles to particular caſes, ſo as to perceive and direct at once what ought to be done; which habit can be acquired only by frequent and long continued practice: all theſe things are common to the phyſician and the ſurgeon; and the laſt of them cannot fail to give a great ſuperiority to one who attends permanently in an hoſpital, over one who attends only by rotation, for a ſhort time at once, and this at long intervals.

But there is one eſſential article of accompliſhment peculiar to the ſurgeon, which renders a permanent appointment and long attendance without interruption peculiarly important, and a ſhort attendance in rotation peculiarly unfavourable to him. I mean the great qualification of *manual dexterity* in the performing of chirurgical operations, eſpecially the more nice and difficult of theſe.

On this point it may be ſufficient to obſerve, becauſe it is ſupreme authority, and complete and deciſive evidence, that notoriouſly and *avowedly* the great motive of the Surgeons for wiſhing to have all their members permitted to attend the Infirmary in ro-

tation,

tation, and for giving ſo valuable a conſideration to the Managers for that privilege, was the knowledge and the dread of that undoubted ſuperiority in ſkill and dexterity, which a few of their number, ſelected to attend permanently in the Hoſpital, would in a few years acquire over their profeſſional brethren.

I take the liberty to call this unworthy ſentiment *avowed*, not that I believe that the Royal College of Surgeons, or any individual member of it at preſent, will avow, or does in fact entertain ſuch a ſentiment; nor yet that I mean, by any kind of inſinuation, unjuſtly and malevolently to impute ſo illiberal a motive to them, either collectively or individually; nor yet that I wiſh to give needleſs offence to a great and reſpectable ſociety, or the individual members of it, whoſe friendly concurrence and aſſiſtance on this occaſion I anxiouſly wiſh to obtain collectively and univerſally, as I am already ſure of obtaining it from many of its members individually. If I may be permitted to judge of what are the ſentiments, and what will be the conduct of the College of Surgeons in their corporate capacity, and of all the individuals in it, from what I have hitherto found without exception, in all of them with whom I am beſt acquainted, and with whom I have converſed on the ſubject, which is certainly the faireſt, and even the moſt favourable way of judging of them; I muſt believe that they feel the ſame indignation at ſuch a ſentiment as I do, that they will diſclaim it in the ſtrongeſt terms, and that they will moſt cheerfully deſiſt from that conduct which correſponds to ſuch a ſentiment, and at firſt *avowedly* proceeded from it.

I ſay *avowedly*; for at the time of the great conteſt on this point in 1738, the *reaſon* ſtated *firſt and foremoſt* in the paper or Memorial written by the Surgeons on the 17th, and read before the Managers on the 19th of May 1738, and containing all their reaſons for ſo anxiouſly wiſhing to attend the Infirmary in rotation, was expreſſed in theſe memorable words:

" *In*

" *In order to preſerve ane equality amongſt the Surgeons of Edin-*
" *burgh.*"

It is the more remarkable that they ſhould have hazarded ſo open an avowal of a ſentiment not fit to be expreſſed even in a ſecret Committee of their Society, that they were acting at that time by and with the advice of counſel learned in the law. It appears that Mr Archibald Murray, Advocate, was their adviſer, and actually was at their conference with the Committee of the Managers of the Infirmary on the 17th May, when the Surgeons agreed to draw up and deliver to the Managers ſuch a paper.

But whoever were the authors or adviſers of it, it is plain that they ſoon became ſenſible of their error in avowing ſuch a ſentiment: it is but common Chriſtian charity to believe that they were heartily aſhamed of it. At any rate, it is certain that no ſuch ſentiment or reaſon is again mentioned in the ſubſequent papers relating to that tranſaction, all of which are fully recorded in our Minutes; and they are pretty numerous and abundantly verboſe, and full of a vaſt variety of reaſons, ſome of them ſtrange enough, and others frivolous; ſo that it is plain the ſurgeons ſoon found out, that their great and favourite reaſon, which had ſome time before induced them to erect and manage an hoſpital of their own, with great expence and trouble, in oppoſition (or as they called it rivalſhip) to this Infirmary, was not avowable.

It can ſcarce be neceſſary to point out, that " to preſerve ane " equality amongſt the ſurgeons of Edinburgh," by obtaining for all of them the right of attending by rotation in this Hoſpital, is in fact neither more nor leſs than " *To prevent a few of them, ſe-*
" *lected as regular ordinary Surgeons of it, from acquiring that high im-*
" *provement, that ſuperior ſkill in every part of their profeſſion, and that*
" *dexterity in the performance of operations, and of courſe that greater*

" *degree of reputation, eſteem, and public confidence, and profeſſional*
" *private practice, which, by their permanent appointment, and long*
" *attendance, and good conduct, in the Hoſpital, they could not fail to*
" *acquire in a few years over their profeſſional brethren.*"

An equality preſerved among the ſurgeons can be nothing elſe. The different expreſſions are ſynonymous and convertible; only the one is conciſe and obſcure; the other full, clear, and explicit.

To produce and preſerve a perfect equality among all the ſurgeons in Edinburgh is impoſſible by any human power; it could be done only by a perpetual miracle; and even a miracle could not make them all, what all no doubt would wiſh to be, eminent in their profeſſion.

Their favourite plan, of having the indiſcriminate right of attending in the Infirmary by rotation, could in no other way tend to preſerve an equality among them, but by diffuſing among all the means of improvement which the attending in the Hoſpital might afford, and conſequently giving to each individual who was capable of improvement, *a very ſmall portion* of that high improvement, which a few individuals properly ſelected, and permanently appointed, as ordinary ſurgeons to attend it, would in a few years have acquired.

Suppoſing their means of improvement, after they had finiſhed their apprenticeſhips and their ſtudies, to be limited to what attendance in the Infirmary would afford, and ſuppoſing them all equally capable of profiting by thoſe means; the *neceſſary conſequence* of the ſyſtem of rotation would be, to produce a *great number* of ſurgeons very indifferently qualified, inſtead of a *ſmall* but *ſufficient number* very highly qualified, for the exerciſe of their profeſſion.

Such an equality, for aught I know, may be attainable and deſirable in ſome of the loweſt mechanical arts; but I am ſure it is not deſirable, and, if it were deſirable, it is not attainable, in a liberal

liberal art, like phyſic or ſurgery, which partakes of the nature of ſcience, gives ample ſcope to the exertion of ſuperior talents, and rouſes to the noble emulation of genius.

As I have found that ſome perſons, whoſe judgment I reſpect, who, at my requeſt, peruſed this Memorial in manuſcript, conceived that I had done injuſtice to the ſurgeons, by putting too unfavourable a conſtruction on their expreſſion, " *in order to preſerve* " *ane equality amongſt the ſurgeons of Edinburgh ;*" I think it right, in order to preclude all ſuch ſurmiſes in future, to quote their own words in explanation of that paſſage, and in order to juſtify and eſtabliſh that interpretation which I have given of it. I preſume it will be acknowledged by all, that the ſurgeons who compoſed and ſubſcribed that paper were the moſt intelligent and unexceptionable commentators on their own text.

The explanation of that paſſage which I am now to quote does not ſtand upon record in our minutes, like the text; but is taken from a printed pamphlet, now become very ſcarce, entitled, " *Memorial* " *concerning the Surgeons Hoſpital.*" It is dated February 18. 1737. One of the papers in it is authenticated by the ſubſcription of GEORGE DRUMMOND, to whom, as has been moſt juſtly and emphatically ſaid, his country is indebted for all the benefits which it derives from the Royal Infirmary: and that paper was ſigned by him in name of the Managers. Another of the papers is authenticated by the ſubſcription of John Kennedy, as Preſident of the Subſcribers to the Surgeons Hoſpital; who, the year before, had been Deacon of the Incorporation of Surgeons, at the time of the violent diſpute with the Managers of this Infirmary.

The whole of that Memorial ſeems to be equally authentic, and evidently the work of Mr Kennedy and his brethren, the founders of the Surgeons Hoſpital. It is a kind of *attack* on Mr DRUMMOND, who, to do him juſtice, fought a hard battle for the Infirmary on this point: but was at laſt overpowered, in a way that, in the

ſequel of this paper, I ſhall have occaſion to explain. The copy of it which I have at preſent in my poſſeſſion, was found among Mr Drummond's papers; and I received it from his grandſon *Mr Jardine*, our preſent treaſurer.

That Memorial of the Surgeons Subſcribers to the Surgeons Hoſſpital, who at laſt got the better of Mr Drummond and the other highly reſpectable gentlemen who were Managers of this Infirmary between ſixty and ſeventy years ago, and brought about that bargain or compact, againſt which I now remonſtrate, is in ſeveral reſpects one of the greateſt literary curioſities I ever ſaw.

It is highly characteriſtic of the coarſe ſentiments and manners which prevailed at that time even among the more reſpectable citizens of Edinburgh. The conſiderations openly avowed, and the arguments chiefly urged in it, are ſuch as no man of a liberal profeſſion would now-a-days ever think of employing; or could liſten to without diſguſt and indignation.

In point of reaſoning, it is no leſs ſingular and wonderful: for admitting the facts or principles to be, in their full extent, as they ſtate them, the inferences from them, with reſpect to this Hoſpital, nay, even with reſpect to the public at large, which they wiſhed to get on their ſide, ſhould be juſt the contrary of thoſe which are drawn from them by the authors of that Memorial.

In point of compoſition, it is admirable and unparalleled; and, were it not for the keen indignation which the peruſal of it cannot fail to excite in the breaſt of every perſon who knows the purpoſe of it, and who has the underſtanding and the feelings of a man, it would be very entertaining; by the ludicrous incongruity between the high-flown profeſſions of humanity, and brotherly love, and Chriſtian charity, which appear in the beginning of their papers, and which by the by ſeem to have lain dormant in their breaſts till they were rouſed to life and energy by the appointment

pointment of a few of their brethren as Surgeons to this Infirmary, and the ſordid conſiderations of pecuniary emolument to themſelves, which they openly ſtate, and dwell upon with great minuteneſs and the keeneſt intereſt, in the ſequel of the ſame papers.

Their Memorial, like *Horace's* monſter, in the beginning of the Art of Poetry, *Turpiter atrum deſinit in piſcem mulier formoſa ſuperne.* But it will be beſt to let it ſpeak for itſelf; as I deſpair of doing juſtice to it by any general account or deſcription: and for many reaſons I wiſh it to be generally and preciſely known what objects the ſurgeons had in view, and by what arguments (beſides the tempting offer of money to the Infirmary) they laboured to enforce their claim.

The following extracts are taken *verbatim* from their printed Memorial.

" We the Surgeon Apothecaries in Edinburgh, erectors of the " Surgeons Hoſpital there, having lately ſet up and brought to " ſome bearing this new Hoſpital, do think it our duty to publiſh " this ſhort account of our proceedings, before we call in the mo- " ney ſubſcribed for.

" We have with pleaſure obſerved the good effects of that pious " and laudable erection of the Royal Infirmary; but have it to " regret, that though the funds of their Hoſpital be conſiderably " increaſed, and managed with great care and frugality by the " Directors; yet we were often called to vaſt numbers of poor, mi- " ſerable, ſick people, who could not be received into the Infir- " mary, becauſe their ſtock is no ways anſwerable to the number " of the diſeaſed poor.

" How often did we ſee poor ſervants or workmen caſt out of " buſineſs by indiſpoſition, confined to a bed of ſtraw, unable to " help themſelves or hire others, deſtitute of meat, drink, fire, and " all other things neceſſary for their condition! which made it im-

" poſſible

" poſſible for us, though never ſo willing, to give that relief by " medicine which their caſes required.

" Miſerable objects of this kind were ſo numerous, that in town " and ſuburbs they amounted to ſome hundreds, (of which nine " or ten only could be taken into the Infirmary at a time). What " then muſt be the number in Scotland! Here pity and compaſ- " ſion, charity and brotherly love, love to our country, and even " common humanity, ſet us a thinking how to provide ſome relief " in ſuch calamitous caſes.

" It was for this purpoſe that we frequently convened, and con- " ferred together; but finding it impoſſible for us to attend, and " provide any conſiderable number with ſuitable accommodation, " as they lay ſcattered in ſo many different and diſtant places; we " concluded, that the erection of a new Hoſpital was the only pro- " per mean by which ſuch numbers could be duly taken care of " by us.

" Therefore we reſolved and determined to afford them all the " aid and aſſiſtance which our ſurgery and circumſtances would " admit of, by laying the foundation of a new Hoſpital, for curing " and taking care of ſuch, whoſe caſes in a peculiar and proper " ſenſe require a ſurgeon.

" For this purpoſe, we concerted to enter into a bond of erec- " tion, obliging each of us to contribute money and medicines ſuf- " ficient to ſet this good work a-going, and to give our attendance " *gratis* during our life.

" Our next ſtep was, to lay our whole ſcheme before our bre- " thren at a meeting of the corporation, for their further advice or " approbation, as well as to invite as many of them as inclined to " join us.

" At which time our deſign was approved of, and they agreed " to call our houſe by the name of *The Surgeons Hoſpital.*

" As

" As ſoon as we had projected the erection of an Hoſpital, it im-
" mediately occurred to us, that the erecting a new, or enlarging
" the old one, might equally ſerve the ſame ends: therefore it was
" expreſsly ſtipulated amongſt us, that as ſoon as we ſhould enter
" into a bond of erection, we ſhould confer with, and make pro-
" poſals to the Managers of the Infirmary, concerning an union of
" the two Hoſpitals.

" Accordingly propoſals of this kind were made to them in wri-
" ting, conferences held for that purpoſe, a Memorial given in to
" us by the ſaid Managers, and a Reply to that Memorial was de-
" livered to them by Mr Kennedy our preſes, and at that time dea-
" con of the Surgeons, upon the 1ſt Monday of July 1736; to
" which we have got no anſwer theſe eight months.

" This we thought fit to mention, to ſhew the world our wil-
" lingneſs to unite the two Hoſpitals." *Mem.* p. 1.—6.

" In this place, we think it not improper to take notice, that
" however much we were convinced of the neceſſity of this Hoſpi-
" tal when firſt it was projected, yet the ſhort experience we have
" had ſince the 1ſt of July, has ſet this neceſſity in a much ſtronger
" light than we could poſſibly have imagined before this trial; for
" although we have been, by the bleſſing of God, uſeful to, and
" cured many, yet if the reſt of the world were to ſee what num-
" bers we are obliged to diſmiſs, purely for want of larger funds;
" were they likewiſe to ſee from what ſlight ſtrains, or inconſide-
" rable bruiſes, incurable diſeaſes ariſe, when not taken care of
" timeouſly, they would very much lament our having neglected
" this piece of charity ſo long.

" The gain of the moſt part of ſervants is but daily ſubſiſtence,
" and few of them can afford to be many days idle; hence it is,
" that ſo many of them are made lame and mutilated, not to men-
" tion thoſe who die, purely becauſe they could neither afford

" themſelves

" themſelves proper diet, reſt, nor medicine at the beginning of " the diſeaſe, when they might have been ſpeedily and eaſily cu- " red; ſo that in truth, they may be more properly ſaid to derive " all this miſery from want than diſeaſe.

" If no proviſion is made for the diſeaſed poor, and if they are " left to linger out a miſerable life, without expectation of any " other relief than death, they are, in ſome reſpect, in a worſe con- " dition than the beaſts of burden, the proprietor for his own ſake " taking care of them, while the poor mechanic or day-labourer is " caſt out naked and deſtitute, to ſtruggle with pain, ſickneſs, po- " verty, and death." *Mem.* p. 11, 12.

This Memorial concludes with the following pathetic addreſs.

" *Therefore, Generous Readers,*

" We now call upon you all, by the titles of *Men*, *Brethren*, and " *Chriſtians*, to denote our common tie of humanity, and yet nearer " tie of Chriſtian charity. By what arguments ſhall we perſuade " you to extend your bounty to a poor Hoſpital in its infancy?

" If you value the prayers of thoſe you may reſtore to health " and happineſs: if pity and compaſſion, the intereſt of your coun- " try, or the approbation of our Saviour, can have influence; come, " like the good Samaritan, pour wine and oil into, and bind up " the wounds of your afflicted brethren, by your charity. Ima- " gine yourſelves given up to pains and want like theirs, or rather " come and ſee the miſeries and untimely deaths which you might " ſo eaſily prevent, (for there is an eloquence in viſible diſtreſs be- " yond what can be imagined); and we hope there will be no " need of other ſolicitations to diſpoſe all of you to contribute ac- " cording to the circumſtances with which God has bleſſed you." *Mem.* p. 14, 15.

The following extract is taken verbatim from the ſame pamphlet, but from another paper in it, entitled, " *Propoſals* from " the

" the Erectors of the Surgeons Hoſpital to the Managers of the In-
" firmary," and ſubſcribed, by the appointment of the Subſcribers
to the Surgeons Hoſpital in Edinburgh, by JOHN KENNEDY, Pr.

" GENTLEMEN,

" As we have occaſion every day, in the courſe of our buſineſs,
" to ſee numbers of ſick and diſtreſſed poor, who often are equal-
" ly urged by their diſeaſes and the want of the common neceſſa-
" ries of life, which renders them proper objects of the charitable
" ſympathy of every compaſſionate and tender-hearted Chriſtian;
" ſo we think ourſelves under the ſtrongeſt obligations to ſhow our
" concern for them, by more than a mere ſaying, *Be thou healed*,
" or, *Be thou filled*. Therefore, after your laudable example, we
" are reſolved, by the aſſiſtance of Almighty God, and the coun-
" tenance of charitably-inclined people, to give ſuch indigent ob-
" jects as you cannot receive, and as we ſhall find ourſelves able to
" maintain, a new opportunity of relief, by erecting, for their en-
" tertainment and ſolace, another *Charity-hoſpital*, (which we are
" now about founding), by taking the pious ſubſcriptions of
" well-diſpoſed perſons, in order to eſtabliſh a revenue for its ſup-
" port; and for which purpoſe we have likewiſe contributed our
" mite, and offer our attendance and neceſſary medicines *gratis*;
☞ " and though we humbly conceive, from the nature of the thing,
× " that our deſign cannot claſh with your foundation, nor the one
" ſcheme prove prejudicial or hurtful to the other, yet we ſubject
" it to your judgments, whether or not, by a coalition, this charity
" might not become more extenſive, and the opportunity thereby gi-
" ven for the improvement of the young gentlemen, ſtudents in phy-
" ſic and ſurgery, be alſo more general? both which were the origi-
" nal deſign and intent of many of your contributors, who, to
" our knowledge, wiſh that none of theſe advantages were limit-

 " ed:

" ed: and as an inducement for you to accede to this propoſal, ſo " much for the general benefit of the pious deſign;

" 1*mo*, We undertake to give our attendance in common with " the gentlemen Surgeons who have hitherto ſerved the Infirmary, " and for the ſix following years, a time ſomewhat more than equal " to that already elapſed ſince your inſtitution; and to furniſh at " our own charges all the medicines that ſhall be needful, and as " long afterwards, in conjunction, as it ſhall pleaſe God to ſpare " us, and we follow our buſineſs in this place.

" 2*do*, And that we ſhall further be donators to your capital in " 2000 merks, by which, and the preceding article,

" yearly will be immediately ſaved; and much more afterwards, " when you ſhall think fit to take in a greater number of ſick per- " ſons.

" 3*tio*, We ſhall further endeavour to perſuade the Subſcribers to " our fund to allow their donations to be transferred to your ſtock, " by which we hope ſomething conſiderable may likewiſe accreſs " for the further encouragement of ſo good and religious a de- " ſign." *App. to Mem.* p. 6, 7, 8.

All this is very good; juſt the fine head and beautiful neck of the Mermaid: Now for the filthy black tail of the fiſh, which the malicious and unclaſſical vulgar of this country would at firſt view be very apt to miſtake for a cloven foot.

" Are burdens or expence things to be coveted, or do they excite " envy? Yet this is the inconſiſtent light in which ſome people re- " preſent our new erection.

" Had the Surgeons of the Royal Infirmary accuſed us of this, " as ſome would maliciouſly inſinuate, they would have evited this " abſurdity, by ingenuouſly acknowledging the advantages which " they reap, and we covet.

" For

" For inſtance: They would have owned, that their apprentices " have much better opportunities of learning ſurgery in an hoſ- " pital than without it; and therefore the Maſters belonging to an " hoſpital muſt neceſſarily get the firſt and beſt offers of apprentices, " and engroſs the education of almoſt all who are bred phyſicians " or ſurgeons.

" And if the maſters are few, their apprentice-fees muſt riſe, " and yet their ſhops be crowded in proportion; ſo that the maſ- " ters who were formerly content with L. 50, muſt now be hired " with L. 100; and if they admit few apprentices at a time, they " may raiſe their price much higher.

" Another perquiſite which falls naturally to the ſurgeons of an " hoſpital, is,

☞ " That the ſurgeons who are daily employed about operations
× " in an hoſpital, are moſt likely to be employed every where elſe: " for who is it that would not rather chuſe a man that has daily " practice, than one who ſeldom has theſe opportunities, even " though he were his brother?

☞ " Hence it appears, that the ſurgeons of an hoſpital, if few, will
× " naturally engroſs the whole buſineſs of ſurgery, in ſpite of all " the other ties of friendſhip, alliance, or blood-relation; and if " they are few, their price, either as maſters or ſurgeons, will riſe " in proportion.

" Theſe are real advantages when confined to a few, as they " are in the Infirmary; but when common to all, as they muſt be " by our ſcheme, the whole benefit redounds to the country and " hoſpital, and not to the ſurgeons; for a monopoly made com- " mon, is no longer a benefit to any particular, it is no monopoly.

" If this monopoly had been given to one ſurgeon (as at firſt it " was agreed to) and minuted in the books of the Infirmary, and " if the doors of the Infirmary had been kept open to every appren- " tice, the miſchief could not poſſibly have been ſo great; becauſe

" one man could not educate all the apprentices, nor ſerve all the
" patients, though never ſo willing, but muſt neceſſarily leave to
" the reſt what he could not overtake himſelf.

" But if an excluſive company of ſix have this privilege, it will
" have moſt pernicious conſequences upon the whole nation.

" *Firſt*, Upon all ſucceeding ſurgeons.

" *Next*, Upon the gentlemen in the country, eſpecially upon thoſe
" who have ſons to educate in our way.

" Although the preſent ſet of ſurgeons, who are already fixed in
" buſineſs, may not feel the bad effects of this monopoly upon
" themſelves; yet the riſing generation, and all who come hereaf-
" ter, even the preſent ſtudents in the Infirmary, when they ſet up
☞ " for themſelves, will not be admitted into it, but muſt toil and
× " ſlave for a ſcrimp ſubſiſtence, and, with great merit, be content
" to paſs for underlings all their life; and, to heighten the diſgrace,
" they may live to ſee the greateſt Dunce among them received
" into the Hoſpital, and thereby run away with undeſerved
" fame.

☞ " In the *ſecond* place, Although the buſineſs of ſurgery will be-
× " come leſs lucrative every year to all, except the maſters of the In-
" firmary; yet, at the ſame time, the apprentice-fees with the ſur-
" geons in this ſingle Hoſpital will riſe every year, i. e. the value
" of the buſineſs will decreaſe, and the expence of good education
" encreaſe, eſpecially in Edinburgh.

☞ " Who, for inſtance, will think of buying his freedom in Edin-
× " burgh at a high price, for the ſmall chance he has of being
" one of ſix who get a name by attending this Hoſpital?

☞ " Thus the freedom of this city will be juſtly deſpiſed, and the
× " number of ſurgeons leſſened, and men of genius diſcouraged from
" ſettling in this place.

" It cannot fail, we think, to affect ſome of the donors to the In-
" firmary very ſenſibly, to ſee that, by their donations, a monopoly

" is

" is eſtabliſhed, very prejudicial to themſelves, their children, and " country.

" Suppoſe, for inſtance, a generous donor has given L. 50 to the " Royal Infirmary, becauſe he thought it would not only relieve " the diſeaſed poor, but likewiſe be of great uſe in the education " of phyſicians and ſurgeons.

" Afterwards, this bountiful patron offers his ſon as an appren- " tice to one of the ſurgeons of the Royal Infirmary, but finds the " apprentice-fee L. 50 *per cent.* more than before, and that by his " own means.

" The *next* reflection which naturally occurs to ſuch a bene- " ficent mind, is, that this is a trifle to me, but I'm ſorry to think " what a heavy tax it will be to great numbers who have ſons to " diſpoſe of this way: I'm ſorry I did not foreſee and endeavour to " prevent a monopoly of this nature in time.

" In the *next* place, Moſt of the gentlemen in the country will " ſuffer by it: for, when any thing extraordinary happens, ſur- " geons muſt be ſent for from the Hoſpital in Edinburgh, at a " moſt exorbitant price, when perhaps the caſe will admit of no " delay, or the ſurgeon here may not be at leiſure to go.

" Theſe are but a few hints of the many bad effects of an ex- " cluſive company of ſurgeons."

I hope it will be admitted, that this is a complete and authentic explanation of what is meant by *preſerving ane equality amongſt the ſurgeons of Edinburgh*, and a good illuſtration of that warm univerſal charity, and glowing brotherly love, and that ſuperabundant zeal to ſerve the ſick poor, and themſelves, which led them to incur the expence, and undertake the trouble of an additional new Hoſpital of their own, *after* this Hoſpital was eſtabliſhed, and *not before*; and not to give their aid and their ſtock to increaſe the funds and extend the benefits of this Infirmary, till they could make

make a bargain with the Managers to ſecure their own corporation and perſonal intereſt when they did ſo.

From the peruſal of that wonderful Memorial, it is evident that this was done without the leaſt regard, or pretended regard, to the good of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, whoſe ſafety, relief, and welfare, ought certainly to have been the *firſt* and *ſupreme* conſideration both with the Managers and with the Surgeons who ſo charitably inſiſted on being allowed to take care of them.

It is very ſtriking, and, if it were not diſguſting and ſhocking, it would be entertaining and ludicrous, to obſerve, that in all that pious, and charitable, and generous, and moſt Chriſtian altercation, about who ſhould have the care of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, all conſideration of what is good for *them* is as much out of the queſtion, as the due care and accommodation, in point of board and lodging, of the rats and mice who might gain admiſſion into the Infirmary, and chooſe to fix their quarters in it.

From the glaring incongruities in their Memorial and its Appendix, already quoted, it is plain that the Founders of the Surgeons Hoſpital were not at all ſcrupulous in what they advanced, and that they relied very much on the ſtupidity and *cullibility* of the good people of Edinburgh, when they preſumed to hazard ſuch inconſiſtent pretenſions and arguments to enforce their claim. But I preſume it muſt have ſurpaſſed all power of the human face to have aſſerted, that the indiſcriminate attendance of all the ſurgeons in Edinburgh by rotation could be *good* for the ſick poor in the Infirmary, at the very time when they were urging moſt ſtrongly and juſtly the vaſt improvement and ſuperiority which a few ſurgeons permanently appointed to attend in the Hoſpital would ſoon acquire over their profeſſional brethren.

The neareſt approach, ſo far as I know, that they ever made to that abſurdity, was in the following curious paſſage of their Appendix

pendix to their Memorial; from the tenor of which, it is plain they knew what a dangerous two-edged ſword they were handling, and how eaſily it might be turned againſt themſelves; for, of their own accord, they ſuggeſt a kind of remedy or antidote, for the evil which they propoſed to do; or, as they are pleaſed very gently to call it, the *inconveniencies to the Hoſpital.* The ſuggeſting of ſuch an antidote is an acknowledgment of the evil and danger of the propoſal to which it is ſubjoined. And ſurely, without any ſuſpicion of flattery to them, we may be allowed to ſuppoſe, that they had good ſenſe enough to know that it would have been much eaſier, and ſurer, and better for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, whatever it might have been for their corporation, to have eſtabliſhed at once a ſimple and rational ſyſtem, ſuch as is adopted in other places, and at that very time was followed here, which, having no ſuch inconvenience or danger, required no ſuch remedy or antidote.

" And as one good effect propoſed by the *Infirmary*, was the im-
" provement of medicine and ſurgery, we thought, by admitting
" the whole corporation, it might add to the experience of thoſe
" younger members who are entering among us every year.

" If any of the corporation had little experience, as it muſt be
" the caſe with all of us at the beginning of our practice, we
" thought it abſurd that theſe ſhould be ſecluded from opportu-
" nities of further improvement in an hoſpital, purely becauſe
" they would be the better of more experience.

" And, to prevent all inconveniencies to the Hoſpital from this
" quarter, we agreed that two of us ſhould always attend the Hoſ-
" pital together, an old and a younger ſurgeon, that one of much
" experience might aſſiſt one of leſs." *App. to Mem.* p. 5.

It can ſcarce be neceſſary to point out that their chief argument here, that they " *thought it abſurd that theſe* (young ſurgeons) " *ſhould*

" *ſhould be ſecluded from opportunities of further improvement in an hoſ-*
" *pital, purely becauſe they would be the better of more experience,*"
is a wilful and groſs miſrepreſentation of a very plain and unde-
niably valid argument.

When a proper ſelection is made of a ſufficient number of the moſt ſkilful ſurgeons to take care of the ſick poor in an hoſpital, the others are not excluded from opportunities of further improvement in it *purely becauſe they would be the better of more experience*, but not in the leaſt for that reaſon, and *purely becauſe the poor patients would be much the worſe for being treated by leſs ſkilful and leſs experienced ſurgeons, and much the better for having the care and attendance of the moſt ſkilful and moſt experienced that could be got for them;* juſt as is the caſe with other patients, *not poor*, and not *in an hoſpital*, and not at the mercy of any ſet of men, who piouſly, and charitably, and out of pure brotherly love, would make a traffic of their miſery.

To thoſe who are learning the arts of phyſic and ſurgery, the improvement that may fairly be derived from a well conducted hoſpital is great beyond all calculation. But this ought to conſiſt in their having opportunities of ſeeing and learning the practice of the moſt ſkilful, intelligent, and experienced phyſicians and ſurgeons.

Whatever is beſt for the patients, it is beſt for the ſtudents to learn. Whatever is learned, or whatever real or ſuppoſed improvement is acquired, at the *expence* of the poor patients, I mean by any *unneceſſary ſuffering*, or *danger*, or *harm* to them, is *injuſtice* and *cruelty*, inſtead of *charity*, *benevolence*, and *brotherly love* to the ſufferers; it is a breach of truſt in thoſe who do it, or permit it; it is an outrage on human nature.

Another of the arguments in the paſſage laſt quoted from the Appendix to the Surgeons Memorial deſerves peculiar attention, not on account of miſrepreſentation, or any kind of diſingenuity in it,

but

but as a good ſpecimen of the reaſoning powers of thoſe who made uſe of it, or rather as a proof how much their furious zeal for their own pecuniary intereſt had blinded them to every other conſideration. For ſurely the authors of that wonderful Memorial muſt have had the common faculties of mankind; but their paſſion in the conduct of their argument hurried them every moment into inconſiſtencies and abſurdities.

They point out *ſtrongly* to their younger brethren, eſpecially to the riſing generation and the ſtudents, that " when they ſet up " for themſelves, they will not be admitted into the Infirmary, but " muſt toil and ſlave for a ſcrimp ſubſiſtence, and, with great merit, " be content to paſs for underlings all their life; and, to heighten " the diſgrace, they may live to ſee the greateſt Dunce among them " received into the Hoſpital, and thereby run away with unde- " ſerved fame."

This would be indeed a lamentable caſe; but let us conſider firſt the probability of its ever happening, and next, what the conſequences would be if it really did happen.

That the Managers *might* appoint the greateſt Dunce among the ſurgeons of Edinburgh to be Surgeon, or one of the Surgeons to the Royal Infirmary, is undeniable: juſt as they *might* purchaſe for the uſe of the patients unwholeſome food, or bad medicines, or poiſon inſtead of food or phyſic. But that in fact they ever *ſhould* do any of theſe things, all of which are contrary to their intereſt, their honour, their duty, to their ſolemn oath *de fideli*, and to every conſideration of reaſon, juſtice, and humanity, without the poſſibility of any rational or honourable motive for ſuch an infamous breach of truſt, appears to me ſo *improbable*, that it may fairly be pronounced infinity to one, that none of thoſe things would be done by the Managers before the day of judgment.

But ſuppoſing, what is barely poſſible, but withal ſo improbable as to be abſolutely incredible, that the Managers ſhould have the

ſagacity to diſcover the greateſt Dunce among the ſurgeons, and the wiſdom to appoint him Surgeon to the Infirmary, the diſmal conſequence ſo pathetically foretold in the Memorial, *never could* follow from it. He *never could*, in that ſituation, run away with undeſerved fame. On the contrary, if he had contrived to acquire any undeſerved fame before, it would ſoon run away from him.

If the authors of that Memorial had ever ſeen an Ape, or even heard of the remark commonly made on that miſchievous brute, they would have known, that the higher he climbs the more he ſhews his breech. The caſe is nearly the ſame with a Dunce of a phyſician or a ſurgeon who is appointed to attend in a great hoſpital; his ignorance and incapacity muſt ſoon become publicly and indiſputably known. Of all ſituations to which his profeſſion may lead him, an hoſpital is the worſt for ſuch a Dunce; who in private practice might long have eſcaped detection, and enjoyed undeſerved riches and honour: and of all the hoſpitals I ever ſaw or heard of, this Infirmary is the worſt for ſuch a Dunce, by reaſon of its intimate connection with the great medical ſchool in Edinburgh, the ſtudents of which, to the number of 200 or more, every year attend it, and are very able and very willing, and have always been encouraged, and never needed to be encouraged, by the profeſſors, to judge for themſelves, and to draw inferences from what they ſee. Theſe judgments and inferences, to my certain knowledge, they are accuſtomed to expreſs with ſuch freedom as would effectually prevent any Dunce from acquiring undeſerved fame; and probably would ſoon be ruinous to any Dunce who ſhould preſume to act permanently as Phyſician or Surgeon to the Infirmary.

But this is the ſmalleſt part of the monſtrous abſurdity involved in that pathetic argument which I am conſidering. The authors of it, in their great eagerneſs to ſecure their own intereſt, overlooked the moſt obvious conſideration, that by their own ſyſtem, which they were labouring to eſtabliſh, and ſoon afterwards got eſtabliſhed,

ed, the greateſt Dunce among them, without putting the Managers to the trouble of finding him out, or the diſgrace of appointing him, would, in his turn, be Surgeon to the Hoſpital for a certain time. And if there ſhould happen to be two or three, or five or ten Dunces among the ſurgeons, the Hoſpital muſt have the full benefit of them all; not only of the greateſt Dunce among them, but of the ſecond and third, and fifth and tenth greateſt Dunce of their number. In ſhort, inſtead of the *immeaſurably and inconceivably ſmall chance* of the Managers for once appointing the greateſt Dunce among them to be Surgeon to the Hoſpital, they take the *abſolute certainty* of that greateſt Dunce, and all the ſmaller Dunces, being Surgeons to the Hoſpital in their turn, from generation to generation. This, to the poor patients who chance to be in the Hoſpital during the reign of Dunce the greateſt, and of all the Dunces, is juſt as bad as if none but Dunces had been allowed to practiſe in it. This undeniable ſtate of the caſe, for it ſcarce deſerves to be called a conſequence of the pernicious ſyſtem at that time contended for by the ſurgeons, and ſoon after eſtabliſhed by their compact with the Managers, is of itſelf complete evidence that the good of the poor ſick was altogether out of the queſtion.

What the real object of the Surgeons Subſcribers to the Surgeons Hoſpital was, in their keen altercation with the Managers of this Infirmary, muſt be equally evident: for none of them ſurely can be ſuppoſed ſo ignorant or ſo ſtupid as to have believed, that attending in this Hoſpital by rotation, for a month or two at a time, once in two, or three, or four years, would give to all or any of them that high improvement, and ſkill, and dexterity, which permanent attendance in it for ſeveral years together, and the daily practice of operations, would have given to a few of them.

I doubt whether there ever was in this world, or ever can be, a more direct, avowed, and diſgraceful oppoſition, between the intereſts, real or ſuppoſed, of a corporation, and the intereſts and

the rights of humanity. For that very great ſuperiority in a few of the profeſſion, which the reſt of them, or the corporation, ſo much dreaded, was juſt what the public in general, and eſpecially the Managers of the Infirmary, ought moſt to have wiſhed for; and juſt what the Managers, and the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, had an intereſt and a *right* to obtain in their attending ſurgeons, if it *could* be procured. Unqueſtionably it is one of the "*things that may beſt* "*conduce to the charitable end and purpoſe*" for which this Hoſpital was eſtabliſhed. It is one of the important advantages, which in a great meaſure compenſate the diſadvantages, or at leaſt the unpleaſant circumſtances, which muſt of neceſſity occur even in the beſt managed Hoſpitals.

But inſtead of that kind of chirurgical aſſiſtance which might *beſt conduce* to their relief or cure, the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, even by the general tenor of the bargain with the ſurgeons, were to have an equal ſhare of what might *beſt conduce* and what might *worſt conduce* to that charitable end and purpoſe. More accurately, and more intelligibly, as many of the individuals admitted into the Hoſpital from Chriſtian charity, and pity to their poverty, ſickneſs, and wretchedneſs, were to receive the latter as the former kind of aſſiſtance. For it muſt be obſerved, that the choice of the Managers, by the law of the land, is limited to the members of the two Colleges reſpectively. None can lawfully practiſe phyſic in Edinburgh but members of the Royal College of Phyſicians; or ſurgery, but thoſe of the Royal College of Surgeons: and a more ample range for choice, if choice were allowed, could not be deſired.

But by the interpretation put upon that bargain, and the manner in which the ſurgeons have acted, it is found by experience, that the Hoſpital, or rather the individual patients have not an equal ſhare or an equal chance of that aſſiſtance in point of ſurgery, which is moſt to be wiſhed for, as what would *beſt conduce* to their welfare; but a very large proportion of that aſſiſtance which is leaſt

to

to be wiſhed for: ſo very little to be wiſhed for, that in a well regulated hoſpital there ſhould be *none* of it; or, if this cannot be perfectly accompliſhed, ſo little of it that it ſhall hardly be known. This may be attained, and actually has been attained in ſome of the great London Hoſpitals, the moſt eſteemed for ſurgery, by the ſimple and rational expedient, of appointing a few young men aſſiſtants to the principal attending and operating ſurgeons, by whom they are to be gradually trained and initiated in every part of their practice, under whoſe inſpection and controul they are to begin by performing firſt the ſimpleſt and eaſieſt operations, and afterwards, as they improve in manual dexterity, and all other requiſite accompliſhments, to proceed to the more complicated, difficult, and dangerous operations. On this plan, ſo different from the one unfortunately eſtabliſhed in this Infirmary, a young and inexperienced ſurgeon never can have the charge of the patients even for a day; nor can ſuch a ſurgeon find himſelf obliged, perhaps the very day when he firſt attempts to operate, to perform ſome of the moſt difficult and dangerous operations.

There can be no doubt that this plan, diametrically oppoſite to that one which the Royal Infirmary has long endured, is the beſt that *has yet been contrived*, perhaps the beſt that *can be contrived*, for the ſick poor in an hoſpital. It gives them every poſſible chance of what *may beſt conduce* to their relief or cure, with the leaſt poſſible chance of what might be in any degree inconſiſtent with *that charitable end and purpoſe*.

Too many odious diſtinctions, I well know, have been made between the rich and the poor, even in thoſe calamitous circumſtances of pain and ſickneſs, which, being common to all, might teach them, that "all are men, condemned alike to groan." But the worſt diſtinction of that kind which I have ever known, appears in the caſe before us. I dare not truſt myſelf to conſider, fully and ſeriouſly, all that is implied in the rich ſo charitably beſtowing

ſtowing on the poor a double or a ten-fold portion of that aſſiſtance which they do not chooſe to take to themſelves.

The celebrated *John of Gaddeſden*, one of the great luminaries of the dark ages, and the firſt Engliſhman who had the honour of being employed at Court as a phyſician, whoſe conſummate impudence and ſingular drollery have procured him ſome readers even in the preſent age, notwithſtanding his almoſt illegible black letter, and almoſt unintelligible crabbed barbarous Latin, was particularly attentive to that diſtinction between rich and poor patients. He tells us of one medicine ſo good, that it was only proper for the rich; and of ſeveral of his favourite medicines he directs a double doſe for the rich, "*Duplum ſit, ſi pro divite.*" This prerogative of the rich, I preſume, even the beggars at their doors will hardly envy them; and we can laugh at the ludicrous abſurdity of ſuch a propoſal. But it is impoſſible to laugh at the propoſal, or at the practice, of beſtowing on the ſick poor in the Hoſpital a ſuperfluity of that kind of aſſiſtance which the rich reject for themſelves when they are ſick, and could not without horror think of having employed on themſelves or their families. Is it in any reſpect leſs horrible when employed on the poor?

I do not believe the Managers could juſtly or legally have made ſuch a bargain, hurtful to the ſick poor immediately entruſted to their care, even though they had been ſure of thereby doing a great ſervice to the public at large. We are not permitted to do evil that good may come of it; nor to do evil to a few for the ſake of good to many; nor to procure any benefit to the rich who are not entruſted to our care, at the expence of the poor and unhappy who are entruſted to our care.

But this point it is needleſs to diſcuſs; for there is no oppoſition between the public good, with reſpect to rich and poor indiſcriminately who are not in the Hoſpital, and the particular good of the ſick

ſick poor in the Hoſpital. What is beſt for theſe, is beſt alſo for the public at large.

The intereſt of both is the ſame, and conſiſts in theſe two circumſtances; *firſt*, That there ſhall be a ſufficient number of phyſicians and ſurgeons to do all their reſpective profeſſional duties which may be needed in the place where they practiſe; *ſecondly*, That theſe ſhall be as well qualified as poſſible in reſpect of knowledge, experience, and manual dexterity; ſo that when their aid is required, they ſhall do their duty as well as it can be done.

I can conceive no other right, nor even any other rational wiſh, either on the part of the Hoſpital or of the public. To wiſh to have their medical aſſiſtants as highly qualified as poſſible, is obviouſly juſt and rational. But to wiſh for a great many more phyſicians and ſurgeons, even the beſt qualified, than they really have occaſion for, appears to me juſt as fooliſh as it would be to inſiſt on taking twice or thrice as many vomits and purges, or to wiſh to undergo twice or thrice as many trepannings, amputations, and tooth-drawings, as are really neceſſary for them.

The ſuperfluous number of ſuch phyſicians and ſurgeons, however good of their reſpective kinds, would be at leaſt uſeleſs, perhaps worſe; yet I ſhould not wiſh to limit too ſtrictly the number of them which might practiſe in any place with real advantage to the public. It certainly ought not to be confined to ſo ſmall a number as would juſt be ſufficient to do all the buſineſs, ſuppoſing all of them to be equally and pretty fully employed. It would certainly be of advantage to the public that there ſhould be ſeveral more, not only to guard againſt the poſſible accidents of abſence, ſickneſs, or death, of ſome of the Faculty, perhaps at the very time when they were moſt wanted; but for another more general and more important reaſon, I mean that they may keep one another in good order.

This

This conſideration Meſſ. Kennedy and Co. who certainly were very competent judges of it, in ſo far as their profeſſion is concerned, have expreſſed without much reſerve in the paſſage laſt quoted from their Memorial, (page 57. line 10.—20. of this paper). I fear the caſe is little better with Phyſicians than with Surgeons in that reſpect. At leaſt the fact is ſo common, and has ſo often been taken notice of, as to render unneceſſary all reſerve in mentioning it, that many Phyſicians, when they get ſo well eſtabliſhed in their profeſſion, as to take it into their heads that people can neither live nor die without their help, become lazy, careleſs, inſolent, and rapacious: juſt the contrary in every reſpect of what they were when they firſt began to practiſe. This has often happened, notwithſtanding the ſtrong check of many of their leſs fortunate and perhaps not leſs able or deſerving profeſſional brethren.

What ſuch men would be if there were no ſuch reſtraint upon them, I have not imagination enough to conceive exactly; but no doubt ſomething very bad, perhaps quite intolerable. For the preventing of ſuch a grievance, I ſhould think it perfectly right, that in every town there ſhould be many more phyſicians and ſurgeons than are really neceſſary to do their profeſſional buſineſs in it; perhaps even twice as many as could earn a comfortable ſubſiſtence by their trade, if the buſineſs were equally divided among them.

Yet, even for this moſt ſalutary or neceſſary purpoſe, an infinite number of the Faculty cannot be needed; for a very moderate number would be perfectly ſufficient.

If in a great town there were profeſſional work enough for *ten* phyſicians and as many ſurgeons, it might be proper, for the good of the public, not for the intereſt of the Faculty, to have *twenty* of each profeſſion ſtriving for a ſhare of the buſineſs. But it would be no advantage to the public, any more than to the Faculty,

culty, to have *two hundred*, or *one hundred*, or even *forty* of them eſtabliſhed in ſuch a town. It is plain, on theſe ſeveral ſuppoſitions, that nine tenths, or four fifths, or one half of them, would be uſeleſs and burdenſome to the public, and to themſelves.

Phyſicians and Surgeons are by no means on the ſame footing, in point of political economy, with corn and cattle; a ſuperfluity of which, in the courſe of nature, is ſoon converted into an additional number of men and women, to the moſt eſſential benefit of the ſtate. They cannot even be applied to various uſes, like a ſuperfluous quantity of wool, and flax, and iron, and other raw materials uſed in manufactures; nor can they be exported and bartered in the way of trade for other valuable articles, like a ſuperabundance of highly-manufactured goods, beyond what their own country can conſume.

The ſuperfluous phyſicians and ſurgeons are abſolutely uſeleſs and helpleſs; they cannot even make work for themſelves, like Attornies. This right belongs excluſively to thoſe worthy members of our Faculty, who fairly mount the ſtage, or advertiſe in the newſpapers.

It muſt not be inferred from theſe obſervations, that I am in any degree tainted with that hereſy which teaches that phyſicians and ſurgeons are at beſt but neceſſary evils; and that the leſs people have to do with us, the better for them. I am ſtrongly intereſted, by my profeſſion and ſtation, to maintain the good orthodox faith, that we are poſitively good things; or ſuperlatively very good things: juſt like the remedies which we employ: for example, Bliſters. But then I think every candid and intelligent perſon muſt own that people may have enough of the very beſt things. If the good people of Edinburgh, in the Hoſpital and out of it, need annually 10,000 Bliſters for the benefit of their health, it is very fit that ſuch a number of bliſters ſhould be prepared for their uſe. It may even be right to have double that number at all times

ready at their ſervice, in order that the dealers in that precious commodity may not raiſe the price of it too much on the public.

But I cannot for my heart conceive that it ſhould be any advantage, either to the public or to the dealers, to have four or five times that number always ready ſpread, and fit for immediate uſe. And we ſhould not eaſily find words to expreſs our amazement, if it were ſeriouſly propoſed, out of pure Chriſtian charity and brotherly love, or partly from theſe conſiderations, partly for the benefit of the dealers, to ſend the ſuperfluous Bliſters to the Royal Infirmary, and actually to clap them on the backs of the ſick poor in it, by virtue of a perpetual contract.

I doubt whether it would be much better, and I can eaſily conceive that it might be much worſe, for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, to be ſaddled with a ſuperfluous number of ſurgeons to take care of them: as Meſſ. Kennedy and Co. have very properly expreſſed it, purely becauſe thoſe ſurgeons would be the better for more experience. No perſon who knows me, I am ſure, will ever ſuſpect me of undue partiality to bliſters, or indeed to any medicines, eſpecially if they are to be employed on my own perſon: yet I ſolemnly declare, that if I were a patient in the Hoſpital, and were obliged to take my choice of one or other of the two evils, I ſhould, without the ſmalleſt heſitation, take my ſhare of the ſuperfluity of Bliſters, rather than of the ſuperfluity of ſuch Surgeons or ſuch Phyſicians.

As to the ultimate great object, ſo openly avowed, and ſo fully illuſtrated by the ſurgeons in their papers, "*to preſerve ane equality* "*amongst the Surgeons of Edinburgh*," I muſt obſerve, in the firſt place, that there ſeems to be a great impropriety, and even ſome incongruity, in the very notion of an attempt to *preſerve* what *never exiſted*; and, I may add, what, from the nature of things, *never can exiſt* by any artificial contrivance whatever.

An

An equality can no more be produced or preſerved among the ſurgeons of Edinburgh, than among the lawyers and phyſicians, the painters and fiddlers, the grocers and tailors, reſpectively. For, according to the various talents which men poſſeſs by nature, and the no leſs various uſes which they make of their natural talents in point of application and active exertion, ſome in every profeſſion will deſervedly attain great eminence, and others will remain in obſcurity all their lives.

The admiſſion to attend promiſcuouſly in the Hoſpital for ſhort periods by rotation, could never counteract the fundamental principles of human nature, or make men equal in talents, and knowledge, and ſkill, and merit, whom God hath made unequal. On the contrary, it would make that inequality more apparent and indiſputable, and more generally known to the public.

On the moſt favourable ſuppoſition that can be made with reſpect to it, a ſuppoſition which is abſolutely incredible, that all the ſurgeons who attended in the Infirmary by rotation were equally capable of profiting by their attendance in it, and did in fact acquire equal improvement by their practice on the ſick poor in the Hoſpital; ſuppoſing further, what is at leaſt as incredible, that this improvement is not acquired at the *expence* of the ſick poor, or by any injury or harm to them; in other words, that the practice of thoſe beginning to practiſe for the ſake of improvement is as good as it will ever be, and *bona fide* as good for the patients as the beſt that could be got for them: ſtill this will neither produce nor preſerve an equality among the ſurgeons with reſpect to the lucrative practice of their profeſſion, which in their Memorial they have ſo fully explained to be their great object in the long ſtruggle, and the bargain which they made, with our predeceſſors in this truſt.

The utmoſt good they could be ſuppoſed to get, one and all, by that kind of attendance in the courſe of their lives, would be no

more than what any one of them would have acquired by one or two years permanent attendance in an hoſpital, at the age of two or three and twenty; probably (for the reaſons already ſtated) not near ſo much. But if this good were equal in all of them, it would no more produce or preſerve an equality among the ſurgeons of Edinburgh, than their having all the ſame number of heads, and fingers, and thumbs could do.

The preſent members of the College of Surgeons, after full ſixty years experience of the bargain in queſtion, muſt know much better than their predeceſſors could do, and much better than I do, how little it has conduced, or at this time conduces, to preſerve an equality amongſt them. I never preſumed, having no right or intereſt in it, to enquire minutely into that matter; but from all that I have chanced to ſee or hear of them in the laſt thirty years of my life, I firmly believe the inequality among the ſurgeons has uniformly been, and is at preſent, in every reſpect, as great as it is among the lawyers, phyſicians, and dancing-maſters. I firmly believe it ever will continue ſo; and that it ought to be ſo, for the good of the public.

I will even go one ſtep further, and tell them, what they will think a very ſtrange paradox, but which nevertheleſs may be *demonſtrated* as certainly as any propoſition in *Euclid*, that if by their bargain with the Managers of the Infirmary, or by any compact among themſelves, they ſhould contrive to produce and preſerve a perfect equality among all the ſurgeons of Edinburgh, it would inſtantly be found *diſgraceful*, and very ſoon would be *ruinous* to them: in leſs than a twelvemonth, they (at leaſt all the men of talents and merit among them) would moſt cordially wiſh the compact and the authors of it at the Devil: no man of genius, or ſpirit, or ambition, or liberal education, ſentiments, or manners, would become a member of their corporation: no man of genius, and well-deſerved eminence in his profeſſion, would continue to practiſe

tiſe ſurgery in Edinburgh; he would either retire from buſineſs altogether, if he had acquired a competency to live upon; or, if not, he would go to ſeek his fortune by the practice of his profeſſion in ſome other place, where his talents and his exertions might be more juſtly appretiated and better rewarded. The loſs which the Royal College of Surgeons would thus ſuſtain, as to the quality of its members, would ſoon be amply compenſated, at leaſt as far as it could be compenſated, by the quantity of them. Their number would ſoon increaſe rapidly, by the addition of all who had the requiſite qualifications, and ſo little activity, or ſpirit, or honourable ambition, as to be contented for life with the miſerable pittance and degrading ſituation which ſuch a ſyſtem of equality would inſure to them. Surgery in Edinburgh would ſoon ceaſe to be a learned or a liberal profeſſion. Thoſe who practiſed it would not be ranked in public eſtimation with phyſicians, or merchants, or lawyers; nor would any of them be known and eſteemed as the authors of learned, ſcientific, and uſeful works on anatomy, chemiſtry, phyſic, or ſurgery. I doubt whether the literary labours of any of them would extend farther than the compoſition of a hand-bill, or a newſpaper advertiſement, to recommend a *pilula ſalutaria*, or a vegetable ſyrup, for the cure of the faſhionable diſtemper. In one ſhort ſentence, by ſuch a ſyſtem of equality, the Surgeons of Edinburgh would ſoon become Barbers again.

Nor are any of theſe propoſitions doubtful, ſtrange as they may at firſt ſight appear; nor can the proof of them be difficult to any perſon who has acquired competent knowledge of mankind, however little he may be acquainted with phyſic or ſurgery.

The great general principle on which they all depend is, that, in this world, though they that run, run all; yet but one obtains the prize. We have good reaſon to believe, that in another and a better world this matter will be ordered better; and that ſurgeons, and all men, will be amply and equally rewarded, according to their merits.

merits. But in this world we muſt be content with that order which it has pleaſed God to eſtabliſh in it; and in the diſcharge of the duties of our ſeveral ſtations, we muſt endeavour to make the beſt of it.

The good of it is obvious. The ſtupideſt fellow that ever went to ſee a race, or any other competition, muſt underſtand, that if the prize were to be equally divided among all who choſe to ſtart for it, there would be but a ſcurvy race. There could be no emulation; there probably would be no exertion, no training, no improvement, and little or no merit in thoſe who would have no occaſion to contend, as they would be ſure of an equal ſhare of the prize without any trouble on their part; and equally ſure that they could get no more than that ſhare of it, whatever trouble they might take.

Every profeſſion is in this reſpect a competition or a race; and well it is for mankind that it is ſo: for it is not the certainty of an equal ſhare of the prize, but the wiſh for a very large ſhare of it, eminence, wealth, and honour, that can rouſe to activity, to laborious and perſevering exertions, and ultimately to that high improvement of a few individuals, which makes them and their profeſſions reſpectable, and uſeful to mankind.

Of the many bitter ſarcaſms which I have heard of on my own profeſſion and profeſſional brethren, one of the ſevereſt I think was that of *Dr Garth*, on his deathbed; when one of his friends, who thought he had repeatedly owed his life to the care and ſkill of the Doctor, came to ſee him, ſorry to loſe his friend and phyſician, yet anxious to aſk him what phyſician he would adviſe him to ſend for, if he ſhould again be taken ill, "*Send for the neareſt*," ſaid *Dr Garth*.

No perſon can be ſo ſtupid as not to perceive the ſeverity of that contemptuous eſtimate of the real and comparative merits of phyſicians, or ſeriouſly to wiſh that a perfect equality were eſtabliſhed

bliſhed among phyſicians and ſurgeons reſpectively, ſo that in caſe of need, he might call a phyſician or a ſurgeon, without knowing his character, or even his name; juſt as he might call a porter or a hackney-coach, without enquiring the name of the porter or the character of the coachman.

If it were poſſible, which it certainly is not by any human power, to produce and preſerve among phyſicians and ſurgeons reſpectively an equality in point of profeſſional ſkill, and merit, and reputation, and employment, as perfect as in the common but neceſſary accompliſhments of reading and writing, and as inviolable as the equality among the Brethren in a Maſon-lodge, with reſpect to brotherly love, and knowledge of the myſteries of maſonry, I do not ſee any thing that the public could gain by the eſtabliſhment of ſuch a ſyſtem; and I ſee clearly that the public muſt loſe the two moſt valuable conſiderations which can be ſuppoſed or wiſhed for in phyſicians or ſurgeons.

In the firſt place, there would inſtantly be an end of that great and conſtant employment of a few individuals of each profeſſion, which gives them the higheſt degree of improvement, and ſkill, and reputation, as well as of that high reputation and ſkill which procures to a few individuals ſo large a ſhare of employment, and ſuch high improvement and ſuperior ſkill.—It is the combination and mutual influence of theſe two conſiderations which ſo generally produces for ſome time the gradually increaſing, and afterwards the wonderfully uniform, profeſſional income of a well-employed lawyer, phyſician, or ſurgeon; although the particulars which conſtitute his annual income are infinitely various, and depend upon numberleſs contingent circumſtances. But that uniformity to which I allude is the reſult of juſt reaſoning, or at leaſt of accurate obſervation, and ſhrewd common ſenſe, in the bulk of mankind, with reſpect both to the cauſes and the effects of very high reputation, and great employment in profeſſional men.

In

In the ſecond place, there would be an end of that honourable ambition and emulation, and that rational wiſh and hope for profeſſional eminence, which makes the high reputation and employment of a few of the profeſſion a ſtrong motive to exertion, and conſequently a great ſource of improvement, in all the reſt; or at leaſt in all of them who are capable of improvement.

In both theſe important reſpects, the preſent natural ſyſtem of inequality appears to me infinitely better for mankind than any ſyſtem of equality that can be contrived; and ſo much and ſo obviouſly better for the ſurgeons themſelves, both individually and collectively, that I muſt take the liberty to ſay, I do not believe that the ſurgeons, who uſed that argument and explained it ſo fully in their printed Memorial, even when moſt blinded by their paſſion, ever ſeriouſly wiſhed or intended it. I conceive that they employed that argument only as a kind of ſtalking-horſe or maſk, juſt as they did the vile hypocritical cant of piety, Chriſtian charity, and brotherly love; when their real motives plainly were, envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableneſs. Such conduct cannot be too ſeverely reprobated; were it only for this reaſon, that it often brings unjuſt ſuſpicion and reproach on the very name of Religion and Virtue.

If any perſon conceives that I do them injuſtice in this remark, let him ſay whether he thinks they could have been ſo ſtupid as not to perceive, or ſo mad as to wiſh for, the following obvious neceſſary conſequences of *preſerving ane equality amongst the Surgeons of Edinburgh.*

Theſe neceſſary conſequences, which I am now to point out, being little elſe than a kind of eaſy arithmetical calculation, may fairly be ſtated with all the certainty and confidence of mathematical reaſoning. If there be any error in them, it may eaſily be ſhewn, and there can be no diſpute about it: if no error can be ſhewn in them, they muſt be admitted as undeniable.

Conſidering

Conſidering the *preſent* ſtate of the diſtribution of the practice of ſurgery in this city, as not only the beſt known, but the moſt intereſting to all concerned in this diſcuſſion, I ſhall take it as the ſubject of the calculations, and the ſuppoſed experiment of introducing and preſerving a ſyſtem of equality, as fully explained by the ſurgeons themſelves in their Memorial.

The moſt ſtriking and indiſputable fact with reſpect to the diſtribution of the practice of ſurgery in Edinburgh at preſent, as well as formerly, and, I believe, in all other great towns, at all times, is, that it is very unequal, ſome of the profeſſion having a great deal more buſineſs than they can manage with eaſe or comfort to themſelves, and many more of them having a great deal leſs.

For the reaſons already mentioned, there can be no doubt that there would be a great, though perhaps not quite ſo great an inequality among the ſurgeons as to reputation and employment, if there were no more of them in Edinburgh than what would be ſufficient to do the buſineſs, ſuppoſing them all to be equally and pretty fully employed, and all of them, to the number perhaps of ten or twenty, to earn a very comfortable ſubſiſtence by their profeſſion. Even on this ſuppoſition, of a much ſmaller number of candidates for public favour and practice, the higher reputation and greater merit, real or ſuppoſed, of ſome of them would make theſe be oppreſſed and haraſſed with buſineſs of the moſt lucrative kind, and procure to them great affluence. Of courſe, ſome of their profeſſional brethren would have leſs than their equal ſhare of buſineſs, and a ſtill ſmaller proportion of the moſt lucrative employment.

But this inequality is made ſtill greater, by there being in Edinburgh many more ſurgeons than would be ſufficient to do all the buſineſs; at leaſt twice, or, as I have been informed by ſome of the profeſſion, three or four times as many as are really wanted. The diſproportion between the number actually practiſing, and the

number actually requiſite for the buſineſs to be done, is much greater among the phyſicians, and ſtill greater among the lawyers.

The reſult with reſpect to the ſurgeons at preſent is, that ſome of them are perpetually rolling about the ſtreets on four wheels, while three or four times as many of them walk about the ſtreets on their two hinder legs in true primitive ſimplicity.

Now let us ſuppoſe the ſyſtem of equality, in reputation, practice, and profeſſional emoluments, eſtabliſhed among them in all its vigour and purity. I ſee clearly that it muſt inſtantly put an end to that odious, moſt unbrotherly, and antichriſtian diſtinction between the many who walk on foot and the few who roll in their chariots. But I cannot ſee what better any individual can be for that. Thoſe who at preſent keep their chariots muſt ever after go a-foot; but thoſe who at preſent go a-foot would never after keep their chariots.

As little will the public, I mean eſpecially their patients, gain by ſuch a ſyſtem. When a man is to be cut for the ſtone, it is of little or no moment to him whether the operator come to his houſe on foot or in a gilded chariot. I ſhould rather think it might be ſome comfort to the patient, in thoſe anxious and fearful moments, to know that his ſurgeon has had ſuch extenſive and ſucceſsful practice that he can afford to keep ſuch a chariot.

But let us ſuppoſe the practice and the emoluments of it equally divided among all the ſurgeons of Edinburgh, it is ſelf-evident that this would not make the practice or the emoluments of it greater than they were before. There would be no more fractures, ſimple or compound; no more diſlocations, trepannings, tooth-drawings, or cuttings for the ſtone; no more wounds or ulcers, claps or poxes; no more diſeaſes of any kind; and though laſt, not leaſt in conſideration, there would be no more guineas paid annually to the Members of the Royal College of Surgeons.

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If the buſineſs to be done is ſuch, as, if equally divided, might eaſily be done by *ten* ſurgeons, all of whom would be pretty fully employed; which ſuppoſition, as I have been told by ſome of their own number, is very near the truth: and if the emoluments of it equally divided among the *ten* would give to each of them an income of L. 1000 a-year; which perhaps is not far from the truth: then, if the practice and the profits were equally divided among *twenty* ſurgeons, each of them would have but half the buſineſs that each of the ten had, and only L. 500 a-year. If the equal diviſion were made among *forty* ſurgeons, each of theſe would have but L. 250 a-year, and but one fourth of the employment, and conſequently but one fourth of that improvement acquired by practice that each of the *ten* would have had.

Even at this ſtate of equal diviſion of employment, experience, and profeſſional income among the Surgeons, I apprehend the public would have much leſs confidence in their ſkill, and much leſs reſpect for their profeſſion than at preſent; eſpecially as none of them could roll about in their chariots, and as ſeveral of thoſe moſt highly eſteemed, would either renounce their profeſſion altogether, or withdraw from Edinburgh to practiſe ſomewhere elſe.

But the equal diviſion of practice and emolument among them would not ſtop at that period. Even L. 250 a-year, though perhaps ſcarce the tenth part of what ſome of them have made, and many of them expect, and all of them would wiſh to make, would be great affluence to many hundreds regularly bred to ſurgery, and well-inſtructed in it, perfectly able to undergo the examination of the College, and really as well qualified to practiſe their art as the preſent members of it. The certainty of obtaining at once, and with eaſe, in Edinburgh, a better income than they had even a chance of obtaining in their former ſituations by their moſt laborious exertions in the whole courſe of their lives, would bring numbers of them every year to ſettle in Edinburgh.

On this obvious and undeniable principle, the number of ſurgeons in Edinburgh, all of them ſharing equally the emoluments of their practice, would ſoon be ſo great, that the income of each would be reduced to much leſs than what I have hitherto ſtated: certainly to *leſs* than the very ſlender income for which many young men of good talents, regularly bred to ſurgery, well qualified to practiſe it, and to become members of the Royal College of Surgeons, chearfully ſerve as ſurgeons mates in the navy, or perhaps in ſituations ſtill more dangerous, more toilſome, and leſs profitable; compared to which, the life of a ſurgeon in Edinburgh, with an income of L. 100, or even L. 50 a-year, to which it would infallibly be reduced by the plan ſuppoſed, might be reckoned eaſe, and comfort, and affluence.

All theſe things are juſt as plain, as that a guinea may be eaſily changed into one-and-twenty ſhillings, or into two hundred and fifty-two pence; but cannot be changed into two hundred and fifty-two, nor even into one-and-twenty guineas. But there is yet another conſideration which in this caſe ought to be attended to, and though not juſt of mathematical certainty, like the preceding, is yet ſo plain and obvious, that no man of ſenſe will diſpute it.

As ſoon as the number of ſurgeons in Edinburgh was much increaſed, and the income of all of them made equal and very ſmall, by the plan ſuppoſed, they would be leſs highly eſteemed, and their ſervices would be much leſs highly paid than they are at preſent. This is juſt what has long been the caſe, and is the caſe at this day in many other countries, in which ſurgery is not eſteemed a liberal profeſſion. On this principle, the ſum earned annually by the whole fraternity would ſoon be much leſſened, and the miſerable pittance of each individual ſharing of it equally, would be leſſened in proportion. In a few years, not one of them would be able to live in a genteel, or what at preſent they think a decent

decent and comfortable manner, nor would any of them be admitted into the company of gentlemen.

The high eſtimation of what are called the learned and liberal profeſſions, and the very liberal payment of the ſervices of thoſe who have attained eminence in them, depend very much on the general and juſt belief, that great or even equal proficiency in them cannot be acquired by every man who may chooſe to undertake them; and that great eminence in them cannot be acquired without ſuperior talents, and perſevering application and ſtudy.

Of all the profeſſions I ever heard of, ſurgery itſelf, I think, affords the beſt example and illuſtration of that principle, and of the conſequences proceeding from it. In this country, as in every other country in Europe, or, I believe, in the world, ſurgery for many ages was not regarded as a learned or a liberal profeſſion. The Surgeons were, and in moſt parts of Europe to this day are, ignominiouſly claſſed with the common Barbers. Within theſe 200 years they have in this country raiſed their profeſſion to very high and juſt eſtimation; in which I hope, for their ſake, and ſtill more for the good of mankind, it ſhall ever continue. But this happy change was not produced, nor could it ever have been produced, by preſerving an equality among the barber-ſurgeons, but quite the contrary; by the very ſuperior ſkill and improvement of a few of their number, which made themſelves and their profeſſion reſpectable, and I hope will always do ſo. One of the firſt good effects of it was the ſeparation of the Surgeons from the Barbers. The common way of ſtating this (as a kind of joke on the Surgeons) is, that the Barbers inſiſted on ſeparating from *them*. I can well conceive that this may be true, but on a different principle from the one inſinuated. When a few men of merit as ſurgeons roſe to eminence, and were eſteemed as gentlemen of a liberal profeſſion, their ſociety and converſation could not be agreeable to the plain barbers. But if the Surgeons ſhould contrive to eſtabliſh among

among themſelves a perfect equality, ſo that it ſhould be indifferent to any perſon who needed the help of a ſurgeon which of them he ſent for, and that a ſtranger coming to Edinburgh to undergo a capital operation might call for a Surgeon, juſt as he would call for a Barber if he wanted to be ſhaved, I dare ſay the Barbers would ſoon be prevailed on to admit the Surgeons into their company again.

I do not ſcruple to ſay, that I am convinced the ſurgeons who publiſhed the Memorial in queſtion, knew that an equality among their brethren was impoſſible; and that, if it were poſſible, it would be ruinous and diſgraceful to them. If not, we may conſider their Memorial and its conſequences as one of the moſt ſtriking examples that ever occurred of how very ſhort-ſighted men are, even where they are ſuppoſed to ſee the cleareſt and the fartheſt: I mean where their own intereſt is concerned. For if their Memorial, and their conſequent bargain with the Managers of this Hoſpital, had really had that effect which the ſurgeons profeſſed to wiſh, it would have been the greateſt evil that could have befallen them.

It is of no conſequence now to know what the ſurgeons thought on this point, or what degree of good faith there was in their Memorial, more than ſixty years ago. But it is of ſome importance in this diſcuſſion to know, whether the ſurgeons at preſent have any wiſh to preſerve an equality among themſelves; whether any of them do not perceive what the conſequences of it would be; and whether they ſeriouſly wiſh for ſuch conſequences.

I firmly believe, that of the five-and-forty ſurgeons in Edinburgh, there is not one who will not at once perceive, that thoſe conſequences of an equality among them, which I have pointed out, are inevitable; not one who would wiſh for ſuch an equality; not one, in ſhort, who would not wiſh to have at leaſt one tenth, if not one fifth, of the lucrative practice of his profeſſion

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in this city, to his own ſhare, even though ten, or twenty, or thirty, of his profeſſional brethren ſhould have no practice at all.

I ſhould be truly ſorry to do them injuſtice in this very moderate eſtimate of their brotherly love and Chriſtian charity. If they think I do them wrong, and really entertain ſentiments ſo different from what I ſuppoſe, I hope they will ſet me right, by fairly trying the experiment.

It will be a moſt edifying ſight to all orders of men; and particularly gratifying to my learned brethren of the Royal College of Phyſicians, who will greatly applaud the principle, and carefully obſerve the reſult of the experiment. I cannot promiſe for them that they will inſtantly concur in making ſuch a trial among themſelves; for I am ſure they would have ſet the example long ago, if they were not ſtrongly perſuaded that it would be very bad for themſelves, for their college, and for the public: But, as men of ſenſe and candour, they muſt always be open to conviction; and if, after a trial of only one century, or even half a century, the experiment ſhall have ſucceeded with the ſurgeons, I am ſure the Phyſicians will be eager to follow their good example; and, if money ſhould be wanted, juſt to ſmooth the way, and remove ſuch obſtacles as generally retard, and ſometimes fruſtrate new and public-ſpirited undertakings, I am convinced the ſurgeons, provided only they are in earneſt in their experiment, and will engage to make the trial of equality but for half a century, may depend on a moſt liberal ſubſcription from the Royal College of Phyſicians, both collectively and individually. As an individual, I ſhall moſt cheerfully give them a thouſand guineas; and I doubt not but my profeſſional brethren will gladly contribute ten times that ſum, rather than the ſurgeons ſhould be baffled in their great work of brotherly love. Who knows how far and how faſt that benevolent principle may ſpread? Like the ſpirit of volunteering, it may ſoon pervade all ranks and conditions of men. Perhaps the pure

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flame may even reach the great temple of diſcord, *Lis ubi late ſonat, et togatum æſtuat agmen*, whoſe reputation for Chriſtian charity and brotherly love, I am ſorry to ſay, is not quite ſo great as might be wiſhed. But whenever our great lawyers begin to ſhare, not only their drudgery, but their fees, equally with all their brethren, a new order of things will ſoon take place: Our ſchool-boys will ſhout,

Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas:
Magnus ab integro ſæclorum naſcitur ordo.
Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna:
Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto.

The illiterate vulgar will hail with joy the beginning of a happy millennium; and even our moſt inveterate reformers and malcontents will be ſatisfied with the commencement of ſuch a thorough reformation and revolution, on principles of equality; a revolution, compared to which, the French revolution in all its glory was but a puppet-ſhew; and the glory of all this glorious revolution will be juſtly due to the Surgeons of Edinburgh, for having begun the great work, by ſetting the glorious example of real equality and true brotherly love.

I cannot diſmiſs the conſideration of their wonderful Memorial concerning their own hoſpital, without making a few remarks on that paſſage in it quoted in page 53. of this paper: "Though we "humbly conceive, from the nature of the thing, that our deſign "cannot claſh with your foundation, nor the one ſcheme prove "prejudicial or hurtful to the other."

It is unneceſſary to ſet about refuting ſeriouſly ſuch an aſſertion; nor ſhould I chooſe to bring into queſtion my own underſtanding and veracity, by conſidering, or affecting to conſider, as a ſerious intended falſehood, what is plainly ironical, and a kind of ſneer. For it is ſelf-evident that the ſcheme of the Surgeons hoſpital

tal did claſh moſt completely and notoriouſly with that of the Royal Infirmary; foraſmuch as every ſhilling given to the former inſtitution, was neceſſarily with-held from the latter. This interference would have been ſeverely felt at any time; it would be ſo even at this day; but at that time, at the beginning of this inſtitution, when it was very doubtful whether money enough could be obtained from charitably-diſpoſed perſons to build this Hoſpital, it muſt have been felt with tenfold force. Unfavourably as I think of the Memorial of the Surgeons, and of the whole of their conduct in that buſineſs, I cannot believe them capable of ſuch imbecility and turpitude, as to aſſert ſeriouſly a deliberate falſehood, ſo groſs and palpable, that no body could believe it even for a moment; and which, therefore, could never ſerve the purpoſe of falſehood.

But admitting it to be only a piece of coarſe irony, approaching very near to an inſult, and equivalent to ſaying, "This is the "rod which we will hold over you; we will with-hold our own "contributions to your Hoſpital; we will intercept as much as we "can of the contributions which charitable perſons would give to "ſuch an Inſtitution; we will do all in our power to prevent, and "probably we ſhall in a great meaſure prevent that good to the "ſick poor which you intend to do them; unleſs you will allow "us all to attend in your Hoſpital indiſcriminately by rotation, in "the way that we think beſt for ourſelves; though we know as "well as you do, that ſuch a mode of attendance of the Surgeons "is much worſe for the patients than the permanent appoint-"ment of a few of them, according to your original Inſtitution;" even in this point of view, it deſerves the moſt ſerious attention.

That I have done the Surgeons (Meſſ. Kennedy and Co.) no injuſtice in this full and rigorous explanation of their ironical ſentence; that ſuch was the true meaning of it, and the real purpoſe of the Surgeons in eſtabliſhing a ſeparate hoſpital of their own;

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appears indiſputably from the whole tenor of their conduct, and of their Memorial; and, above all, by the uſe they made of the money which they had ſubſcribed themſelves, and procured from others, on pretence of piety, charity, and brotherly love, and of the *neceſſity* of a ſeparate hoſpital for the relief of the ſick poor, whoſe wretchedneſs they painted ſo ſtrongly; for, as ſoon as they could make their bargain with the Managers of this Infirmary, and procure for themſelves indiſcriminate admiſſion into it, they gave up their own ſeparate inſtitution, transferring the money which they had raiſed for it to this Hoſpital.

It is plain, that whatever relief could be given to the ſick poor by a ſmall ſeparate hoſpital, might, at firſt, as well as at laſt, have been given to them, by enlarging this Infirmary, by increaſing its funds, and thereby extending its benefits.

If this was beſt for the poor and unhappy, for whom they profeſſed ſuch pity and benevolence, and, by their ſubſequent conduct, they tacitly acknowledged that it was beſt for the poor, the ſurgeons acted maliciouſly, uncharitably, and diſhoneſtly, as well as hypocritically; they were actually obtaining money on falſe pretences, when they eſtabliſhed their own ſeparate hoſpital, and procured ſubſcriptions for it, inſtead of increaſing the funds, and extending the benefits of this Infirmary.

If a ſeparate hoſpital of their own was beſt for the relief of the ſick poor, the ſurgeons acted maliciouſly, uncharitably, and diſhoneſtly, both to the poor and to their ſubſcribers, in giving up that ſeparate hoſpital, and transferring the money ſubſcribed for it to this Infirmary.

Ignorant or regardleſs of the principles of good reaſoning as we muſt ſuppoſe Meſſ. Kennedy and Co. to have been, and unfavourably as we muſt think of them for the whole of their conduct in this buſineſs, we cannot ſuppoſe them ſuch idiots as to have believed even for a moment, that it was both *for the good* of the

the ſick poor, and *not for their good*, that there ſhould be two ſeparate hoſpitals in this city, inſtead of one great Infirmary.

The *only* difference between the bargain which they made at laſt with the Managers of this Hoſpital, giving to it the money which they had raiſed expreſsly for a ſeparate inſtitution, and the raiſing and giving of ſuch a ſubſcription originally and unconditionally to this Hoſpital, was, that, by their bargain, they got leave to attend in it promiſcuouſly by rotation. But this (whether good or bad for them) was bad, and the very reverſe of pity, benevolence, and brotherly love, to the ſick poor; as the ſurgeons well knew; for, independently of all other conſiderations, their own arguments in their Memorial (quoted page 55. of this paper), afford complete proof, and are in fact the ſtrongeſt poſſible acknowledgment, that the original mode of their attendance, by ſelection and permanent appointment, was much better for the poor patients.

In another point of view, the ſame ironical ſentence deſerves ſome attention. It not only fully explains the motives of our predeceſſors in this truſt for making ſuch a bargain with the ſurgeons, but is their beſt or only poſſible excuſe; for there can be no complete juſtification of their conduct, in doing what was bad for the patients, as well as a direct violation of their charter.

It evidently was not only the tempting offer of a conſiderable ſum of money, of which at all times, and particularly at that time, this Hoſpital has ſtood much in need; but the dread of a rival inſtitution, which might cut off the ſupplies, or even prevent the building of this Hoſpital, that induced the Managers to make a bargain with the ſurgeons, ſo evidently and cruelly bad for the patients.

It is curious to obſerve how near they came to downright higgling, before they finally ſettled their bargain. In their Memorial, (quoted page 54. of this paper), the ſurgeons offered the Managers 2000 merks, (Scots); ſomething more than L. 100: and

promiſed further to endeavour to perſuade their ſubſcribers to allow their donations (to the ſurgeons hoſpital) to be transferred to this Infirmary.

The anſwer of the Managers to this part of the propoſal (page 10. of the Appendix to the Surgeons Memorial, and recorded alſo in our own Minutes, June 7. 1736, vol. 1. page 100.) is in theſe words: " The offer of 2000 merks donation to the Infirmary by " the twelve gentlemen is very *charitable*.

" What ſhall ariſe from the laſt article will no doubt add to the " Infirmary ſtock; and it is wiſhed that the gentlemen would ſig- " nify what the amount of the ſubſcriptions and donations they " have procured is."

With ſhame and ſorrow I muſt confeſs, that the honoured name of GEORGE DRUMMOND (in name of the Managers) is ſubſcribed to this paper, acknowledging *that* to be charitable which was ſordid, uncharitable, and unfeeling, beyond example; and deſiring to know how much more money might be expected on the ſame unworthy condition.

But the ſurgeons were too ſharp for them here. Whether they had read *Tacitus*, or had diſcovered it by their own natural ſagacity, I know not; but they ſeem to have underſtood perfectly the power of imagination, and that principle of human nature, *Omne ignotum pro magnifico eſt*; which, as our countryman *Galgacus* near 1700 years before told his ſoldiers, had brought the Roman armies to the Grampian mountains.

The reply of the ſurgeons was in theſe words: " You ſeem to " think the offer of 2000 merks donation to the Infirmary very " charitable, but wiſh to be informed of the amount of the ſub- " ſcriptions we have procured: but this is impoſſible for us to gra- " tify you in at preſent, ſeeing our bonds for that purpoſe are " abroad in many different hands, and we cannot yet judge it " proper

" proper to call them in ; only in general we can tell you that our " friends have not hitherto been unſucceſsful."——*Appendix to the Surgeons Memorial*, page 16, 17.

Nothing could be better adapted to raiſe in the Managers the higheſt expectations of what they might obtain in point of money for the Infirmary, if they would comply with the condition required of them by the ſurgeons ; and to increaſe their dread of a great and dangerous oppoſition, which might have been ruinous to this Infirmary, if they would not comply with that condition.

The reſult was, that the Managers, who plainly could have withſtood the 2000 merks, were induced ſome time after to make the bargain, on obtaining a much larger ſum from the ſurgeons ; about L. 500, as I am informed.

It is unneceſſary to make any remarks on what is ſo ſtrongly ſtated in their Memorial and Appendix about their apprentices, and the hardſhip of excluding from opportunities of inſtruction, by ſeeing the practice in the Hoſpital, thoſe who were not apprentices to the ſurgeons of the Infirmary. That would be very bad indeed ; but it is now quite out of the queſtion. All ſtudents of phyſic and ſurgery, whether apprentices or not, have equal opportunities, on very moderate terms, of acquiring improvement in the Hoſpital, by ſeeing the practice of the phyſicians and ſurgeons. It cannot be ſuppoſed that the Managers ſhould ever do any thing ſo unjuſt to the ſtudents, and ſo ruinous to the Hoſpital, as to alter this ſyſtem.

I believe it will be more neceſſary to make ſome apology for the unreaſonable length of this digreſſion, occaſioned by the conſideration of the Surgeons Memorial. The truth is, it came into my hands very lately, and after this paper was written ; which circumſtance has occaſioned many needleſs and unpleaſant repetitions. But nevertheleſs it was moſt acceptable to me. In the language of ſurgery, it was ſo admirable a *ſubject*, that fleſh and

blood

blood could not reſiſt the temptation to diſſect and anatomiſe it. It afforded the ſtrongeſt poſſible proof and illuſtration of the real principles on which their bargain with the Managers was made. It contained an open avowal of ſuch ſentiments and conſiderations as I never could have thought of, and which, if I had thought of them, I ſhould never have preſumed to impute to any individual or any ſet of men. I have good reaſon to believe that the preſent members of the College of Surgeons know as little of it as I did ſix months ago, and will be as much aſtoniſhed, and as indignant at it, as I was when I firſt read it. It would be little to ſay that none of them can be ſuppoſed to entertain or adopt ſuch ſentiments: I do not believe that now-a-days a ſociety of porters would have put their names to ſuch a memorial, or would avow ſuch ſentiments. The practical inference from this, on the part of the ſurgeons, is obvious, and, I ſhould think, irreſiſtible.

I return to the conſideration (ſtated in page 43. of this paper) of the great importance of manual dexterity in a ſurgeon, acquired by the almoſt daily performing of operations, which makes it ſo much for the benefit of the ſick poor in an hoſpital to be attended by ſurgeons permanently appointed to it, and ſo cruelly bad for them to be attended by all the ſurgeons of a great city in rotation, for ſhort periods at a time, and at long intervals, and ſtill worſe, to be attended for months or years together by a ſucceſſion of the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced of the profeſſion.

This general truth being ſelf-evident and undeniable, and abundantly acknowledged, and even proved by the ſurgeons themſelves in the paſſage quoted from their Memorial, any additional proof or illuſtration of it muſt be ſuperfluous. Not therefore as neceſſary for my argument, but as honourable to the profeſſion, and a good illuſtration of the general truth, I think it right to mention, that many of the moſt eminent ſurgeons have candidly and liberally acknowledged the ſuperior ſkill and dexterity of

ſome

ſome individuals, not *regularly* of their profeſſion, in the performing of ſome operations, for example, thoſe on the Eyes and the Teeth, to which they had devoted much time and attention; and which they were in the daily habit of performing.

But this is not all. There is a ſtill more important conſideration with reſpect to an operating ſurgeon. It is not every perſon bred a ſurgeon, and well inſtructed in the principles of the art, and able to apply them readily and judiciouſly, who is or ever can become even a tolerably good operator. For this, ſome phyſical, and perhaps even moral or mental qualities, are neceſſary, which many people do not naturally poſſeſs, and never can acquire: for example, a clear quick eye, a ſteady hand, and what are called *good nerves:* I mean that kind of calmneſs and firmneſs of *mind*, which gives a man perfect command of himſelf in thoſe diſtreſſing, embarraſſing, and unexpected circumſtances, in which an operator muſt often be placed.

No perſon who has not been an eye-witneſs of the ſhocking ſight of a ſurgeon deficient in ſome or all of theſe qualifications, performing a difficult and dangerous operation, can form any juſt notion of their importance; or of the impoſſibility of a man becoming a good operator who has them not.

But ſome notion at leaſt of what is meant may be acquired by an eaſy and familiar illuſtration. Every man who is not extremely deficient in underſtanding may learn the rules of common arithmetic; and with ſufficient and very frequent exerciſe will learn to apply them readily and juſtly to various ſubjects: ſo may any ordinary perſon acquire the principles of phyſic and ſurgery, and with frequent practice learn to apply them properly and readily to particular caſes, ſo as to know perfectly what ought to be done in ſuch caſes. But many a man not deficient in underſtanding or knowledge can never learn to write a fair hand or to make a pen; both of which performances are a kind of *ſurgery* or *hand-work*.

Many

Many men, after much practice for forty years, will ſpoil two pens out of three which they attempt to make; and, when they get ever ſo good a pen, can ſcarce write legibly.—I need not ſay that ſuch imperfection of ſight, or unſteadineſs of the hand, as would only ſpoil a pen or blot a page of paper, might, in the performing of a nice and dangerous chirurgical operation, put out an eye, or kill a man.

This conſideration of itſelf might be ſufficient to ſhew the importance of a proper *ſelection* of the ſurgeons, even more than of the phyſicians, who are to attend and practiſe in a great hoſpital. But there are many other reaſons equally applicable to phyſicians and ſurgeons, which ſtill more ſtrongly evince the ſame truth with reſpect to the neceſſity of *ſelection*; which, next to permanent attendance, is undoubtedly the moſt eſſential circumſtance, in order to inſure, as far as human wiſdom and power can inſure, the beſt medical aſſiſtance to the patients.

This indeed is ſo plain and obvious as ſcarce to require or admit of proof. The abſurdity of ſuppoſing the phyſicians or ſurgeons of an hoſpital to be given to it without ſelection, either purely by chance or lot, or by the contingent circumſtance, implying no peculiar merit or demerit in them, that they were the youngeſt, or that they were the oldeſt on the liſts of their reſpective colleges, is ſo glaring, that, to argue *againſt* it, or any other indiſcriminate appointment, may appear as needleſs and as fooliſh as to argue *for* it.

But the experience of more than ſixty years in this Hoſpital having too plainly ſhewn that ſuch an obvious truth may be overlooked or diſregarded, and a more pernicious abſurdity eſtabliſhed than that which appears ſo glaring, it may not be uſeleſs to point out whence moſt eſpecially ariſes the expediency or neceſſity of a proper ſelection among the phyſicians and ſurgeons who may be willing to give their ſervices in an hoſpital.

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In the firſt place then, one general and ſtriking fact muſt be obvious to every perſon of competent underſtanding, and any the ſmalleſt obſervation of what paſſes in the world around him; I mean, that of the great number of men regularly bred to phyſic or ſurgery, very few ever riſe to eminence in their profeſſion.

Of thoſe who have attained conſiderable eminence in their profeſſion, ſome no doubt have owed their ſucceſs to very unworthy arts; and far from having any real pre-eminence in merit, have been as much inferior in underſtanding and profeſſional knowledge as they were in probity to their leſs ſucceſsful brethren. But ſurely it would be unreaſonable, as well as illiberal, to ſuppoſe that this has generally been the caſe. Every man of ſenſe and candour, who has had proper opportunities of judging, will acknowledge, that the moſt eminent and ſucceſsful in every branch of medicine have been men of well-eſtabliſhed character for probity, underſtanding, knowledge, activity, and aſſiduous attention to the *ſtudy* and the *duties* of their profeſſion. Every man of ſenſe ſhews what he thinks on this point, by his conduct, when his own health or life, or the health or lives of thoſe who are deareſt to him, are at ſtake.

The conduct of phyſicians and ſurgeons, when themſelves or any of their families are ſick, and the ſelection which they make when they ſtand moſt in need of the profeſſional aid of their brethren, evince ſtill more ſtrongly the ſame important truth. For, though they may not in general be thought the moſt *candid*, they are undeniably the moſt *intelligent* judges; and, in the circumſtances ſpecified, they are, in every reſpect, the moſt *competent* judges of the merit of their profeſſional brethren.

Every ſuch inſtance of ſelection, either by profeſſional men of the greateſt judgment and knowledge, or by men of ſenſe and obſervation who are not of the medical profeſſion, implies the ſtrong conviction entertained by them of the great ſuperiority of ſome

 practitioners,

practitioners, and the important advantage to be obtained by employing the beſt.

It is by no means the accidental circumſtance of ſeniority that ſolely or even chiefly determines the public opinion, or that of the moſt judicious and intelligent individuals, ſtrongly in favour of ſome practitioners, and as decidedly againſt others. In moſt profeſſions, eſpecially in thoſe which depend partly on cloſe and accurate thinking, and the natural powers of reaſoning, partly on acquired knowledge and experience, and the improvement of the natural faculties by frequent exerciſe, as, for example, in the profeſſion of the law, and very remarkably in phyſic and ſurgery, a certain degree of *ſtanding* as it is called, implying both maturity of judgment, and time and opportunities for improvement, as well as ſome portion of experience, is undoubtedly of very great importance, and almoſt eſſential to ſucceſs. Without it, in ſome degree, no man who has not either very extraordinary talents, ſuch as may be ſhewn beyond diſpute at the bar, but hardly in ſurgery, and ſtill leſs in phyſic, or is not placed in very peculiar circumſtances, ſo as to have no rivals, or none but the moſt contemptible, can acquire great reputation and employment.

But mere *ſtanding* or ſeniority, ſuperadded to the moſt complete and regular education in the profeſſion, will neither procure confidence from the public, nor ſucceſs and employment to any perſon. We are well accuſtomed to ſee many juniors ſurpaſs, and moſt deſervedly ſurpaſs their ſeniors, perhaps even their own inſtructors; and leave them ſo far behind, that, before half their race is run, they can have no further hopes of ſucceſs.

Some individuals ſoon ſhew by their talents, and the uſe which they make of them, that they can profit more by ſeven years of obſervation and experience, than others could do in the longeſt life. And very many ſoon ſhew that they are incapable of ever improving; from a real natural want of thoſe faculties which would

enable

enable them to obſerve accurately, to compare different obſervations together, to reaſon acutely and fairly, and ultimately to draw juſt and uſeful practical inferences from what they had obſerved. Many not naturally deficient in their intellectual powers become ſo from defects or improprieties in their education; eſpecially the want of that general preliminary education which improves the faculties, while it extends the ſphere of knowledge, and directs the attention to proper objects. And many more, who have no ſuch excuſe either from natural or accidental defects, never improve, and ſoon ſhew that they never will, purely by their own fault. They think the knowledge or improvement they had acquired, when they firſt entered on the exerciſe of their profeſſion, ſufficient for all purpoſes, or at leaſt for their purpoſe; they find the effort of attention in obſerving, comparing, reading, and thinking, too laborious; and as they flatter themſelves it is unneceſſary for them, they ſoon ceaſe to make it.

Of courſe, all chance of improvement in them is at an end; they grow older, and yet grow never the better or wiſer. On the contrary, as they often become more negligent, they grow worſe in every reſpect, and really become more ignorant, foraſmuch as they acquire no new knowledge, and forget much of what they had formerly learned.

They become a kind of Drones, content to do their buſineſs in a humdrum workman-like ſort of a way; by which they have the beſt chance of eſcaping reflections or cenſure. Their faults are much more frequently ſins of omiſſion than of commiſſion. For once that they do any thing poſitively and immediately pernicious, they miſs, from negligence, or ignorance, or both, an hundred opportunities of doing good.

None but thoſe who are thoroughly bred to phyſic, and who have taken the trouble to attend *patiently* and *fairly* to what they have ſeen, and done, and heard, and read, have any notion how

imperfect it is, conſidered either as a ſcience or an art; how many diſeaſes are little or not at all underſtood; how precarious many of our beſt remedies are; and how much of their ſucceſs, or chance of ſucceſs, depends on the judicious and well-timed application of them. The ſame *means* are very generally employed in the ſame diſeaſes by the moſt ſkilful and attentive, as by the moſt ignorant and negligent; and it muſt be ſo, becauſe they are not kept ſecret: but it depends on their being properly employed, and this again on the ſkill and attention of the practitioner, whether they ſhall be *remedies*, or the contrary. Yet the moſt ignorant and careleſs phyſician or ſurgeon who preſcribes or adminiſters the ſame *things* which the moſt judicious often employs, will very generally be thought as completely exempt from cenſure, and as well entitled to praiſe, as the other could be, with all his knowledge, diſcernment, and attention.

Even the patent or quack medicines, as they are generally called, are not in general bad *drugs*. Many of them no doubt are inſignificant; but many of them, as we have frequent opportunities of diſcovering by their characteriſtic effects, are juſt our own beſt known and moſt active medicines, given under new names, and variouſly diſguiſed: for example, Aloe, Jallap, Antimony, Mercury, Arſenic, Opium, and above all, Brandy. But theſe quack-medicines, which a Phyſician or Surgeon who knew what they were might employ with ſafety and advantage, are every year pernicious to thouſands, by being raſhly, indiſcriminately, and improperly uſed. The caſe is juſt the ſame, when the ſame powerful medicines, under their proper names, are employed by ignorant or negligent practitioners, though of the regular faculty.

None but thoſe who are in the ſecret have any notion how much eaſier it is to *preſcribe* than to *think*; and of courſe how much oftener the former is done than the latter, and to what little purpoſe.

None

None but thoſe in the ſecret have any notion how faithfully many Phyſicians and Surgeons go on for thirty or forty years, or longer if they live longer, employing, even in the commoneſt diſeaſes, the remedies which they were taught when young, though uſeleſs at beſt, if not pernicious; how faithfully many great and grave writers have tranſcribed from their predeceſſors, from generation to generation, the ſame frivolous, abſurd, or dangerous precepts, the ſame uſeleſs or pernicious preſcriptions, and the ſame ſilly remarks; how tenaciouſly many practitioners adhere to old receipts, ſo extravagantly abſurd as to contain perhaps fifty or a hundred ingredients, of which probably not more than three or four are of any uſe; and how manfully they fight againſt the introduction of other remedies, the moſt ſimple, powerful, and ſafe; which they reprobate, and will not employ, for no other reaſon but becauſe they are new.

Men of ſuch talents, characters, and habits, whether Phyſicians or Surgeons, can neither improve by experience themſelves, nor contribute to the inſtruction of others, and the improvement of their art. They are peculiarly unfit to practiſe in an hoſpital, where, on account of the great number and urgency of the caſes to be treated, the greateſt extent and accuracy of knowledge, the greateſt quickneſs, preciſion, and diſcrimination in applying it, and in one word, the greateſt effort of attention and thought is required. Any deficiencies in them, which in private practice might well have eſcaped obſervation and cenſure, muſt ſoon become conſpicuous on ſo public a ſtage; juſt like thoſe of a lawyer at the bar; and will not only bring on themſelves reproach and contempt, but will in ſome meaſure affect the character of the Hoſpital itſelf. Whatever leſſens the confidence of the public in the adminiſtration of it, and of the patients who reſort to it, in the ſkill of thoſe to whoſe care their health and lives are entruſted,

entruſted, tends ſtrongly to fruſtrate the benevolent purpoſe of the inſtitution, and is in truth a very great injury to the public.

Theſe remarks I have ſtated ſtrongly, in order to ſhew the neceſſity of *ſelection* for the purpoſe of hoſpital-duty, among Phyſicians or Surgeons of the ſame education and legal qualifications, as Members of the one or the other College; a neceſſity reſulting from the very different perſonal characters, and diſpoſitions, and talents of different individuals. No perſon acquainted with the practice of phyſic or ſurgery, I am ſure, will think my remarks unjuſt or exaggerated.

If they appear ſo to others, not acquainted with the practice, nor perhaps with many practitioners of phyſic or ſurgery, let thoſe who diſtruſt my remarks, attend only to what they may every day obſerve in common life, and they will ſoon be convinced of the truth and the force of all that I have ſaid with reſpect to the fitneſs of ſome, and the unfitneſs of others, to improve by experience.

No perſon, I truſt, thinks ſo meanly either of phyſic or ſurgery, as to ſuppoſe that leſs talents are requiſite to practiſe them with credit and ſucceſs than what are neceſſary for the common conduct of life; implying a competent knowledge of men and things: but every perſon of good ſenſe and obſervation muſt often have remarked how very differently different people profit by experience and obſervation in common life.

Some men, naturally of good ſenſe and quick diſcernment, and active, vigorous minds, who attend accurately to what paſſes around them, are diſtinguiſhed even at an early period of life for ſagacity, prudence, deciſion, and quickneſs in conduct, and a thorough knowledge of the characters of men, and the management of buſineſs. They are accordingly reſpected in the world, and often conſulted on nice and difficult occaſions by thoſe who are acquainted

acquainted with them, and who very wiſely rely more on the judgment of ſuch men than they would do on their own.

But ſuch men are not the majority of mankind. An infinitely greater number are either ſo deficient in natural talents, or ſo culpably negligent in the uſe they make of them, that they appear to acquire no improvement at all by their experience of men and things. At the age of fifty or ſixty they are a good deal more dull, but not a jot wiſer, than they were at twenty-five or thirty. They become as arrant Drones in common life as any are in law, or phyſic, or ſurgery. No man of ſenſe, who knows them, would ever think of conſulting them, or relying on their judgment, in any buſineſs whatever, any more than he would think of conſulting a lawyer when he was ſick, or a phyſician when he was engaged in a lawſuit.

A man of ſuch a character, never can deſerve reſpect, or confidence, or employment, even in his own profeſſion: and there are many ſuch in law, in phyſic, in ſurgery, and in all the employments of life.

The moſt uſeful of all profeſſions, one far more important than law, or phyſic, or ſurgery, becauſe on it we muſt all depend for our daily bread, I mean Agriculture, affords the moſt complete illuſtration that can be deſired, or indeed conceived, of the point which I here inculcate. Some farmers, intelligent, active, obſerving men, have not only improved much themſelves, but have made great improvements in the art which they had learned in their youth; and have ſhewn to the conviction of every man who is capable of thinking, that it may ſtill be much further improved. But a thouſand times more of them have gone on from youth to age, from generation to generation, and, if left to themſelves, would certainly go on to all eternity, practiſing, in a ſlovenly imperfect way, the ſlovenly imperfect art which their fathers had taught them, never once attempting to make any

improvement,

improvement, nor even dreaming that any improvement could be made, either in themſelves or in their art.

I hope my profeſſional brethren will not be offended at me, becauſe in this compariſon I have waved all conſideration of the ſuperior dignity and difficulty of Phyſic and Surgery, as partaking of the nature of ſcience, and conſequently deriving improvement from the exertions of great and original genius. I did ſo purpoſely, ſenſible that I was ſtating but part of the truth, and the part leaſt favourable to my argument, as well as to the dignity of the medical profeſſion; but then it was the part of the truth not liable to ſuſpicion or cavil.

I ſtated only activity, attention, and ſhrewd common ſenſe, as not leſs neceſſary for accurate and uſeful obſervation and improvement in phyſic and ſurgery, than they are for acquiring knowledge of the world and prudence in the ordinary buſineſs of life. *That* I preſume will not be diſputed.

But if I, an old profeſſor of the theory and practice of phyſic, were to ſay all that I believe, or know to be true, with reſpect to the importance of ſcience, and the advantages of genius, in the ſtudy, the practice, and the improvement of phyſic, nay, even the indiſpenſable neceſſity of ſome portion of ſcience and genius, to enable a perſon to improve himſelf, by obſervation and experience; I ſhould be diſtruſted at leaſt, and perhaps laughed at: But as ſuch a diſcuſſion is not eſſential to my preſent purpoſe, I will not without neceſſity expoſe myſelf to that mortification.

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SECTION III.

IT is not for the ſake of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, that I have entered into this long detail and diſcuſſion. They, I am ſure from what I have already heard directly of the ſentiments of ſome, and indirectly of the ſentiments of others of them, need no arguments or illuſtrations of mine to convince them of the grievous evil of the preſent mode in which all the ſurgeons of Edinburgh, or all of them who chooſe, attend in this Infirmary by rotation; and of the only adequate remedy for ſo great an evil on the *two* general principles for which I contend; the *ſelection* and *permanent appointment* of a ſufficient number of ſurgeons to do the Hoſpital-duty. I have good reaſon even to believe, that, from the beginning of this inſtitution to the preſent hour, there never has been any doubt, or difference of opinion, among all the ſucceſſive ſets of Managers of this Hoſpital, for more than ſeventy years, on either of thoſe points. The way they acted at firſt, in appointing permanently a ſmall number of ſurgeons to attend in the Hoſpital; the conſiderations by which they were induced to depart, in leſs than ten years, from their original wiſe and good plan, I mean the oppoſition of the Corporation of Surgeons, their eſtabliſhment of a rival hoſpital, which threatened great injury to the ſlender funds of this inſtitution, and their offer to give up their own rival hoſpital, and to transfer the money raiſed for it to this Infirmary, on condition that they ſhould all be allowed to attend in it by rotation; the conduct of the Managers in 1750-51 with reſpect to the phyſicians; the attempt which they made above thirty years ago to get rid of that compact with the ſurgeons, and which, though feeble and ill conducted, ſhewed plainly that they

knew the greatneſs of the evil under which the Hoſpital laboured, and ſaw what they ought to do, though they had not firmneſs to perſevere in it, and bring the queſtion to a fair and public trial; all theſe things amply teſtify what the Managers have always *thought*; indeed, conſidering how many of their number have always been experienced phyſicians and ſurgeons, men well acquainted with the practice of ſurgery in hoſpitals here and elſewhere, I may ſafely ſay what they have always *known*, of the evils of the preſent ſyſtem of rotation.

It is not therefore for their inſtruction, for they can need none, on this point, but for the edification of others not ſo well informed, that I take ſo much trouble on ſo plain a ſubject; which they may ſoon have occaſion to conſider for the firſt time.

I muſt own likewiſe, that I wiſh to place it in various and ſtrong lights, in order to rouſe the attention, and procure to it the candid and patient conſideration, of a ſet of men who may be ſuppoſed to know more about it already than I do: I mean the members of the Royal College of Surgeons themſelves.—I intend that they ſhall ſee, and have an opportunity to conſider fully, all that I advance on a ſubject which ſo nearly concerns them. I have nothing unfavourable to ſay of the character or talents of any individual of their number; and if they, collectively or individually, think they can refute any of my general obſervations and reaſonings, they are heartily welcome to try to do ſo. I ſhall be ready moſt cheerfully to acknowledge my error whenever it is pointed out to me: and at any rate I ſhall be glad to ſee the point in queſtion made a ſubject of ſtrict and public diſcuſſion.

From the conduct of the Surgeons more than ſixty years ago, which brought about the bargain and the ſyſtem of rotation againſt which I remonſtrate; from their conduct and keen oppoſition more than thirty years ago, when an attempt was made to overturn

overturn that ſyſtem; and even much more lately, from their conduct only ſeven years ago, when a reform was propoſed in it by Dr Duncan, at that time Preſident of the Royal College of Phyſicians, and one of the ordinary Managers of the Infirmary, as I am at preſent, I know it is apprehended by ſeveral of our number, that the ſurgeons will ſtrongly oppoſe, on this occaſion, that alteration with reſpect to the mode of their attendance, which I think eſſential to the good of this Hoſpital; and that they will inſiſt on adhering rigorouſly, and making the Managers adhere to their original bargain in 1738.

I have ſtrong reaſons for being of a different opinion; and for thinking more favourably of the ſentiments and probable conduct of the Royal College of Surgeons, both individually and collectively. That all of them will think as I do, and act as I ſhould wiſh them, ſo that the whole College *unanimouſly and moſt cheerfully* ſhall act as wiſely, liberally, and honourably, as the College of Phyſicians did on a ſimilar occaſion in 1751, is what I cannot promiſe; becauſe I have not had an opportunity of knowing the ſentiments of every individual among them. But I think it *highly probable* that they will do ſo, either unanimouſly, or by a very great majority. And at leaſt I am certain that they will *not be unanimous* in the oppoſite conduct. In the courſe of the laſt twelve months I have had occaſion to learn the ſentiments of ſeveral very reſpectable members of that College on the point in queſtion. I have found them the ſame with my own; and the ſame that in the courſe of the laſt thirty years of my life I have heard times innumerable from ſtudents, phyſicians, ſurgeons, and Managers of the Infirmary.

Some of thoſe opinions which I have heard the moſt lately were expreſſed in terms more ſtrong and preciſe than I have ventured to employ; as well they might be, by men who had themſelves been engaged in the buſineſs, and had of courſe the moſt direct and par-

ticular knowledge of many things which I knew only in general and by report.

I have already had occaſion to mention, that ſeveral eminent ſurgeons of this city, men ſtill in the vigour of life, have withdrawn from their hoſpital-attendance. Their reaſons for doing ſo are abundantly well known; for ſome of them have ſtated their reaſons in writing for declining to attend in their turn.

I have *ſeen*, among the papers in the hands of the clerk, a letter from one eminent ſurgeon, (Mr Bennett), in which he declares in very plain terms his unfavourable opinion of the preſent ſyſtem of attendance of the Surgeons, and gives that as his only reaſon for declining to attend in rotation.

I have *heard* of another letter much ſtronger on the ſame point, from another eminent ſurgeon, (Mr Law), who alſo declined to attend in his turn. But of his letter I have not been able to procure a ſight. Probably ſome of the Managers will remember the ſubſtance of it.

Some other ſurgeons have declined to attend in rotation without giving their reaſons in writing; but have made no ſcruple to declare, by word of mouth, that they thought the ſyſtem ſo bad, that they would not be concerned in it; as not thinking they could either do much good to the patients, or act with any credit to themſelves. It would be highly improper for me to name any of theſe gentlemen. I leave it to themſelves to expreſs their own ſentiments, in time, place, and manner, as they think beſt. I ſhall be much ſurpriſed, as well as diſappointed, if they do not expreſs them very plainly, and ſupport them by ſtrong arguments derived from an intimate knowledge of the ſubject.

I have even been informed, that ſome members of the College of Surgeons have declared, that they thought the preſent ſyſtem of attending by rotation ſo bad, that they would in their own College propoſe, or vote for, its immediate abolition; were it not that they

were

were afraid they might be ſuſpected of doing ſo with a view to obtain the permanent appointment for themſelves.

I reſpect the delicacy of the ſentiment which ſuggeſted this kind of reſerve and ſelf-denial; but I do not approve of their conduct. No man ſhould be diverted or deterred from doing what he knows to be right, by the apprehenſion that the ignorant and malevolent will miſtake or miſrepreſent his motives; nor ought any man to allow a ſentiment of romantic delicacy, or an over-ſtrained point of honour, to interfere with the more ſerious and ſacred duties of truth, juſtice, and humanity. I hope, therefore, they will conſider the ſubject again, and more fully, and act differently, when it comes before them anew.

I cannot conceive that there ſhould be any real difference of opinion among the members of the College of Surgeons as to the *evil reſulting to the Hoſpital*, whatever there may be as to the *benefit accruing to them*, from their attending in rotation: nor yet can I think ſo unfavourably of them as to believe that when they are convinced of the former point, they will obſtinately, rigorouſly, and ſelfiſhly, contend for the latter. But, at any rate, the two points are eſſentially different; and muſt be kept quite diſtinct in all *our* reaſonings; and eſpecially in any diſcuſſion with the ſurgeons.

This, I have reaſon to believe, was not duly attended to on ſome former occaſions; and eſpecially ſeven years ago, when, on Dr Duncan's motion, this ſubject was laſt conſidered.

All I have been able to learn of the reaſon why it was ſo ſoon dropped, is, that it was found, or feared, that the "*Surgeons would* "*make a terrible noiſe about it.*"

This conſideration appears to me no reaſon at all. If a ſet of men engaged in an important public truſt are to be deterred from doing what they know to be right by the fear of *noiſe*, their nerves muſt be weak indeed.

Let

Let us for once ſuppoſe the worſt that is poſſible, or much worſe than is poſſible, in that reſpect, on the preſent occaſion.

Let us ſuppoſe, that, in conſequence of this Memorial, every individual member of the College of Surgeons ſhall, to his own ſhare, make forty times more noiſe than *Orlando Furioſo* did at full moon when he was maddeſt, and ſhall continue in that unparalleled ſtate of uproar for twenty years without ceaſing.

I can ſee no great harm in all that noiſe; and no harm at all to any but thoſe who make it. It can do no harm to this Hoſpital; it cannot injure our cauſe; it cannot even weaken my argument; on the contrary, it would ſtrengthen it greatly; and would ſoon bring the queſtion to a moſt favourable iſſue. Ninety-nine parts in the hundred of all that noiſe would of courſe be beſtowed on me; whom it would not deprive of one hour of my natural ſleep, and to whom it would afford infinite amuſement and gratification while I am awake.

But, ſeriouſly, I ſee no reaſon that we have to ſuppoſe that the Royal College of Surgeons, or any individuals among them, ſhall, on this occaſion, or on any occaſion, ſpeak or act like madmen. I have the pleaſure of being well acquainted with many of them, whom I reſpect very highly, as men of ſenſe and worth, and talents, and knowledge of various kinds, as well as of great and deſerved eminence in their profeſſion. I have no right, and no wiſh, to think leſs favourably of many others of them, with whom I am little or not at all acquainted.

Suppoſing that on the preſent occaſion, as on ſome former occaſions, the majority of them ſhould not be convinced by thoſe conſiderations which are perfectly convincing to us, and ſhould keenly oppoſe, as injurious to their College, what we judge to be requiſite for the good of the patients in this Hoſpital: even on this ſuppoſition, the moſt unfavourable that we can rationally make with reſpect to them; far from being entitled to expect that they ſhould give

give us at once a deciſive advantage over them, by ſpeaking or acting abſurdly or outrageouſly, we muſt *expect*, and *be prepared for*, the very oppoſite conduct on their part; that they will act *prudently* and *cautiouſly*, ſaying very little, and keeping on the defenſive as much as poſſible; like men of talents, fully ſenſible of the very delicate ſituation in which they are placed; ſenſible in particular, that the ſtrongeſt argument which they have to urge, *that* argument on which they *muſt ultimately* reſt their cauſe, ſuppoſing it to be good in law, which I am well aſſured it cannot be, is yet of ſuch a nature, ſo unpopular, and approaching ſo near to an outrage on natural juſtice, humanity, and common ſenſe, that it can ſcarce be publicly avowed.

If every one of them had the talents and the tongues of both the *Erſkines*, and all their knowledge of law to boot, there are but *two* things in any degree to the purpoſe, which they could urge in oppoſition to our claim; either that there are no ſuch evils as we conceive in the preſent mode of their attendance in the Hoſpital, and that it is as good for the patients in it to be attended by all the ſurgeons of Edinburgh in rotation for two months at a time, as it would be for them to be attended by a ſmall number of Surgeons, ſelected and permanently appointed Surgeons to the Hoſpital; or elſe that their contract with the Managers of the Infirmary, made in 1738, is good and valid, and cannot now be ſet aſide, whether the mode of their attendance eſtabliſhed by it be good or bad for the patients.

We muſt expect that they, and that the counſel learned in the law whom they may chooſe to employ, will endeavour to make the moſt of both theſe arguments, as it is plain that nothing elſe *can* avail them: For if they admit that the preſent mode of attending by rotation is bad for the patients, and that it would be better for the patients to be attended by ſurgeons permanently appointed, and alſo admit that their contract with the Managers is

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null and void, or give it up as improper ; it would follow *neceſſarily*, both that we had a right to appoint permanently a ſufficient number of ordinary Surgeons to attend in the Hoſpital, and that it was our duty immediately to do ſo. Every thing elſe that could be ſaid on the ſubject would go for nothing.

I ſhall conſider briefly each of thoſe two arguments by itſelf, as I am well convinced that nothing but the careleſs blending of the two conſiderations together could have concealed from the view of either party in the contract, that the one is palpably abſurd, and the other groſsly unjuſt.

As to the former argument or conſideration, the evils reſulting from the preſent mode in which the ſurgeons attend in the Hoſpital by rotation, I am ſure it cannot be neceſſary, either to repeat what has already been ſtated ſo fully on that point, or to ſay any thing more in proof of ſo plain a truth, till ſome perſon ſhall be found either ingenious enough to attempt to refute, or bold enough flatly to deny, what appears ſelf-evident, and what both in word and deed has been univerſally acknowledged.

I own I ſhould like to ſee the man who could ſeriouſly maintain, that a ſurgeon of good talents and education acquires no improvement by many months or years of hoſpital-practice ; that a young ſurgeon, who perhaps had never practiſed in an hoſpital or any where elſe, or who at the utmoſt perhaps had practiſed in an hoſpital for two months three or four years before, is as well qualified from the hour he begins to attend in an hoſpital, and to practiſe and operate in it, and can practiſe as well, with as much credit to himſelf and advantage to the patients, as he could do after many years conſtant attendance and daily experience of that kind of practice ; that it is no loſs or injury to two or three dozen of patients in an hoſpital, to loſe the attendance and care of an experienced ſurgeon, who had been treating them for many days or weeks, and come under the care

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of an inexperienced ſurgeon, who is juſt beginning to attend, and practiſe his art for the firſt time in his life; and that there is poſitively no evil to the patients, to the Hoſpital, to the public at large, from there being a ſucceſſion of ſuch inexperienced ſurgeons attending in the Hoſpital, each for two months at a time, for two or three years together.

I ſhould even like to ſee the man who could maintain, that if this queſtion were quite entire and new, if no ſuch contract between the Managers and the Surgeons had ever been made, it would be the *duty* of the Managers of this Hoſpital to appoint all the Surgeons of Edinburgh to attend in it by rotation, as being for the *good* of the patients; or even that the Managers *might*, *without impropriety or blame*, appoint all the Surgeons of Edinburgh to attend in that manner, as being a thing *indifferent*, and at leaſt *not hurtful* to the patients.

But all theſe propoſitions are ſo extravagantly repugnant to common ſenſe, as well as to the moſt ample, uniform, deciſive experience, that it would be in vain to expect to have the pleaſure of ſeeing any man openly aſſert them. Such a man would need no refutation; it would be ſufficient juſt to aſk him the reaſon of the faith that was in him.

We muſt expect that every poſſible care will be taken by thoſe to whom they are adverſe to keep thoſe propoſitions out of ſight; and this care we muſt be prepared to fruſtrate, by bringing them into full view, and placing them in the ſtrongeſt light; for unleſs thoſe ſeemingly extravagant propoſitions can be expreſsly maintained and eſtabliſhed, we make good our firſt great point, that the preſent mode of the Surgeons attending by rotation is *bad* for the patients, and conſequently that it is our *duty* to alter it *if we can.*

As to the ſecond point, which is at leaſt as eſſential as the firſt in this queſtion, namely, That ſuch is the contract made with the ſurgeons more than ſixty years ago, and that, right or wrong in

itſelf originally, good or bad for the patients, it is now the *right* of the Surgeons, and that they will maintain it, and inſiſt upon it; it is a matter, I own, of more nicety and difficulty.

The former was a point of phyſic rather than of law, and a matter of plain common ſenſe; of which I preſume, without vanity, I can judge as well as any lawyer can do.

The latter is *very much* a point of *law*, which I am no judge of; but as it ſeems to me to be not *purely* a point of law, but to involve alſo ſome little conſiderations of natural juſtice, humanity, and common ſenſe, I ſhall take the liberty to ſuggeſt what occurs to me on conſidering it in this point of view; truſting and wiſhing that no regard be paid to my ſentiments, except in ſo far as they are approved of by men, whoſe talents, education, and profeſſional habits, qualify them, and entitle them to judge of ſuch arguments.

I cannot ſay with truth, that I ſhould like to ſee the man who, admitting that it was bad for the patients, ſhould yet inſiſt on attending and operating in his turn, becauſe it was his *right*, and was expreſſed in the contract of the Managers with the Surgeons. I ſhould be diſguſted and ſhocked at the ſight of ſuch a man, and ſhould never ſee him or think of him again without horror.

If ever, for my ſins, I ſhould have the honour, which I could well diſpenſe with, of a *tete a tete* with ſo formidable a perſonage, I ſhould be more inclined to put myſelf in a poſture of defence than to attempt to reaſon with ſuch a monſter. I ſhould think I ſaw a real living *Shylock*, diſplaying his ſcales, whetting his knife, and inſiſting on cutting a pound of fleſh from the breaſt of his miſerable debtor, becauſe it was the forfeit contained in his bond. But even the imagination of *Shakeſpeare* could conceive nothing ſo horrible as a whole college or corporation of *Shylocks*, each of them brandiſhing his whetted knife, and claiming his right, in his turn, to cut his pound of fleſh from the breaſts of thoſe whom a rigorous

rigorous contract had put in their power, and maintaining that this bloody right was indefeaſible, and muſt be tranſmitted unimpaired to their ſucceſſors through all generations.

My charity exceeds not; yet, after ſeven and forty years of life, I have ſeen nothing in human nature that ſhould make me think ſuch a character and ſuch conduct *poſſible*.

Far from believing that the whole College of Surgeons, or that the majority of them, will act in ſuch a manner, I do not believe that one individual among them will do ſo, or will think of ſuch conduct with leſs horror and indignation than I do.

On this very account I have been anxious to ſtate it to them ſtrongly, and to rouſe their attention to it. I am convinced that many of them have never once thought of it; for though they might overlook it, I am ſure they could not diſregard it, if it even for a moment engaged their attention. I have been anxious, for their edification, to ſeparate carefully the two points, What is *good* or *bad* for the patients, and what may be thought the *right* of the Surgeons by their contract with the Managers. Suppoſing what is bad for the patients to be the right of the Surgeons, in what a light muſt they appear when they claim that right?

After all the enquiries that I have been able to make, I cannot find, that, from the firſt inſtitution of the Infirmary to this hour, the College of Surgeons, or any individual of their number, or any other body, has ever maintained, that their attendance in the Hoſpital by rotation was for the good of the patients. On the contrary, the very oppoſite reaſon, "*To preſerve ane equality among* "*the Surgeons*," that is, in other words, to prevent a few of them from acquiring very high improvement, by permanent attendance in the Hoſpital, was originally *avowed* by the Surgeons, and was long believed to have had great weight with them; which I truſt it has not now.

The neareſt approach which I have yet heard of, to juſtifying that mode of attendance, or ſaying that it was *good*, or rather that it was *not bad*, for the patients, is, that it is their right, and they will not relinquiſh it, and that " every ſurgeon in Edinburgh " *can do the buſineſs well enough.*"

That any reaſonable number of them taken, either by ſelection or by lot, to attend permanently, would ſoon learn to do the buſineſs very well, and much better than it has been done any one year ſince the Hoſpital was built, I have no doubt. But that is not the queſtion. On the ſyſtem of rotation, it has not been done ſo well, nor can it be done ſo well as it might be done on a different ſyſtem. It is never done *well enough*, if it can be got done *much better*. The difference between the buſineſs as it *has been done*, which any body who pleaſes may call *well enough*, and as it *might have been done* much better, is the amount of the evil and of the injury done to the patients by the contract of the Managers with the Surgeons. It is the pound of fleſh cut from the breaſt of a miſerable debtor, to gratify an auſtere and rancorous creditor.

Without a metaphor, let us conſider ſtrictly and literally what that difference amounts to, and what are the evils brought on a certain number or proportion of the patients individually.

To the unfortunate ſufferers it is the difference between life and death ; between ſight and blindneſs ; between the preſervation and the loſs of a limb ; between vigorous health and incurable diſeaſe, weakneſs, or lameneſs ; between comfort and miſery for the reſt of their days.

It would be abſurd, illiberal, and unjuſt in the higheſt degree, to ſay that *all* the patients who have ſuffered ſuch evils in the Infirmary, under the care of the Surgeons attending in rotation, have ſuffered by their want of ſkill, experience, and dexterity. It is ſelf-evident that the very beſt ſurgeons, juſt like the beſt phyſicians,

cians, can no more cure *all* their patients than they can make them *all* immortal.

But on the other hand, though leſs harſh to thoſe concerned, it would be juſt as abſurd to ſay, that *none* of thoſe patients ſuffered from that cauſe; and that *none* of them could have been cured if they had been attended by ſurgeons of greater ſkill, experience, and dexterity; ſuch as every ſurgeon, not abſolutely incapable of improvement, would acquire by permanent attendance in an hoſpital. To aſſert *that*, would be to maintain that there is no difference in point of ſkill and dexterity among ſurgeons; that none of them improve by experience; and that all of them, from the moment that they have finiſhed their apprenticeſhips, and before they have begun to operate or to practiſe, are equally good practitioners and operators, and equally and utterly incapable of ever growing better, either by their attendance in this Hoſpital, or by any other means.

Such ridiculous abſurdities no man *can* think or ever *will* aſſert. The only queſtion that remains then is, What is the proportion of ſuch ſufferers to the whole number of the patients who come under the care of the ſurgeons, one year with another? Is it one in ten, or one in twenty, or one in fifty? Is it one, or is it ten, or twenty, or fifty in a year? In other words, Has the whole number of ſufferers by that bargain between the Managers and the Surgeons in ſixty years, been only ſixty, or has it been ſix hundred, or twelve hundred, or three thouſand? The laſt number may well be thought extravagantly great: but ſurely the firſt number is as unreaſonably ſmall. A man muſt be thoroughly ignorant of ſurgery, and muſt hold very cheap the difference of ſkill, experience, and dexterity among ſurgeons, who can ſuppoſe that not one patient in twenty, or not more than two or three in a year in this great Hoſpital, will ſuffer by being under the care of inexperienced inſtead of experienced ſurgeons.

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The annual or total number of ſufferers by the evil which I have ſtated cannot be, nor ought it to be preciſely aſcertained; for this would be uſeleſs and ſhocking. As the reality of the evil is too certain, be the amount of it more or leſs, it ought to be aboliſhed without delay.

Nothing leſs than actual experience of the fact can make me believe that even one individual member of the College of Surgeons can be found, who, for his own gratification or benefit, will claim a right which is a cruel wrong to others. My confidence in this juſt and rational ſentiment, and the correſponding conduct on their part, makes me wiſh that the firſt ſtep, on the part of the Managers, be an explicit communication of our ſentiments on the ſubject, to the Surgeons; a full expoſition of the very ſtrong reaſons on which thoſe ſentiments are founded; and a requeſt to be informed of theirs.

This, I ſhould think, would probably ſuperſede all further trouble, and eſpecially all litigation, on the ſubject.

SECTION IV.

POWERFUL as the reaſons are which induce me to think that the Surgeons will think juſt as we do, and act as we ſhould wiſh them with reſpect to the contract between their corporation and our predeceſſors in this truſt, as ſoon as they attend ſtrictly to it, and to its ſad conſequences on the ſick poor who come under their care, I am ſenſible that thoſe reaſons do not amount to demonſtration. The contrary ſuppoſition, however *improbable*, is ſtill *poſſible*. It is therefore incumbent on me to *conſider*, though not to *believe*, the moſt unfavourable ſuppoſition, That the Surgeons, or the majority of them, will not admit that the preſent mode of their attendance

tendance is *bad* for the patients ; or that, whether it be good or bad, their contract with the Managers is *good and valid*, and that therefore they will inſiſt on adhering to it themſelves, and making us adhere to it.

I muſt then ſtate on what principle of law or equity I conceive that *that* contract ought to be *reduced*, or *annulled*, or *ſet aſide*, or whatever be the legal phraſe for *getting rid* of it.

All kind of quibbling or ſpecial pleading about the formality, or the terms, or the interpretation of the terms, of the contract, is here quite out of the queſtion. The meaning of it is plain ; and this alone concerns us.

It *muſt* be either *good* for the patients who come under the care of the Surgeons, or *bad* for them, or *indifferent* to them.

If it be *indifferent* to them, it would be fooliſh and wrong in us to deſire to get rid of it ; *fooliſh* to give ourſelves any trouble about a thing of no benefit to the Hoſpital ; and *wrong* to do a diſobliging thing to the College of Surgeons, or to any individual in it. As Managers of this Infirmary, we can have no intereſt and no wiſh to give offence to a reſpectable ſociety, on whoſe good ſervices, in whatever way the duty may be ſhared among its members, we muſt rely for the diſcharge of an eſſential part of the duty of the Hoſpital. As an individual, it is clearly my intereſt, and certainly is my wiſh, to live on good terms with every ſurgeon in Edinburgh ; with ſome of whom I muſt meet every day of my life in the exerciſe of my profeſſion ; often with many of them in a day. I neither have, nor can I have, on this occaſion, any motive for what I urge ſo ſtrongly, but honeſt zeal for the ſafety and welfare of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital entruſted to our care. There is not one ſurgeon in Edinburgh whom individually I wiſh to ſee excluded from the Hoſpital ; nor even one, whom from perſonal favour or private good opinion I wiſh to ſee appointed permanently one of the Surgeons to the Infirmary in preference to his profeſ-

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ſional brethren. Indeed, my conduct towards them, through the whole courſe of my life, has been ſuch, that I am confident, not one of them will do me the injuſtice to ſuſpect me of entertaining ſuch an unworthy purpoſe. Nay, further, it is but honeſt to declare, though it muſt appear a very ſtrange avowal from one of my profeſſion, that I am no judge of the qualifications of ſurgeons. I was not bred a ſurgeon; and though I was obliged, as a ſtudent, to learn the general principles of ſurgery, as other phyſicians do, I never liked to ſee the practice of it. I never am preſent at any operation in private practice, unleſs at the patient's particular deſire; of courſe I ſee ſuch operations very ſeldom. Though I have been intimately connected with the Infirmary as a clinical profeſſor for more than three and twenty years, I have not during all that time been preſent at a public operation in the Theatre, where the junior Surgeons chiefly operate, but one day; and this I believe full twenty years ago; and not to ſee any of them operate, but to ſee the celebrated *Baron Wenzel* operate on the eye. The conſequence is, that of the junior ſurgeons in Edinburgh, (counting downwards from the middle of the liſt), there is *not one* whom I ever ſaw perform any greater operation than a common blood-letting. Of courſe I know no more of their real and comparative merits than I do of the qualifications of the ſurgeons of Paris or of Vienna. On this account, as well as to preclude all ſuſpicion of any ſiniſter motive on my part for what I am at preſent doing, I declare once for all, that I will take no concern directly or indirectly in the choice of Surgeons to the Infirmary, when the rational ſyſtem of ſelection and permanent appointment ſhall be eſtabliſhed. I take it for granted, for very obvious reaſons, that probably from the firſt, and certainly very ſoon, the ſelection muſt be made from among thoſe junior ſurgeons, with reſpect to whom my opinion or vote could have no value; while on the contrary the with-holding of

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it, and keeping ſtrictly to the general principle, as I have here done, may be of real uſe.

If the bargain with the Surgeons in 1738 be *good* for the patients, we ought to adhere to it, and to wiſh them to adhere to it, whether it be formal and legally valid or not. And whether it be *good*, or only *indifferent* to the patients, we can have no claim in equity, nor any rational wiſh to get rid of it.

But if it be really *bad* for the patients, as I have ſtated, and endeavoured to ſhew, that it is, then, in point of *equity*, it ought to be annulled; although in point of law and words, it were as formal and as ſolemn as the Pragmatic Sanction.

I conceive it *ſhould* or *muſt* be reduced, on this plain and obvious principle, That in the contract made between the Managers and the Surgeons, the *intereſt* and the *rights* of another ſet of men, I mean the patients admitted into the Hoſpital, have been *overlooked* and *violated*.

Every ſuch contract, whoever are the parties in it, is reprobated in law as a *pactum illicitum*. It is *barely poſſible* that ſuch a contract ever ſhould be pleaded in a court of juſtice, on account of the turpitude at leaſt, if not the guilt implied in it. If it were pleaded in court, it muſt be annulled at once with indignation, and cenſure, if not puniſhment, of one or both parties.

Without pretending to any ſkill in law, a man may be ſuppoſed to know that the moſt formal and ſolemn contract that two individuals can make to do harm to a third, for example, to murder, or rob, or cheat him, is *ipſo facto* null and void; that it *cannot* be enforced by law; and that either party adhering, or attempting to adhere, to ſuch a contract, would be ſeverely puniſhable.

Nor can I believe that the caſe is eſſentially different with reſpect to any contract, however formal, between two ſocieties of men, or bodies corporate, which contract, either directly and avowedly, or indirectly by its natural and neceſſary conſequences,

trenches on the intereſts and natural rights of any individual, or any ſet of men, or of mankind in general.

For example, If the Royal College of Phyſicians and the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh ſhould enter into the moſt ſolemn contract with one another, obliging themſelves, individually and collectively, under very heavy penalties, never to viſit a patient more than once in a day; and never to viſit a patient after dinner, which certainly would be a great relief to us all, as well as to our coachmen and horſes; ſurely ſuch a contract could never be valid or enforceable by law. I am convinced, that on the firſt mention of ſuch a contract in a court of juſtice it would be laughed at, and annulled at once.

Nay, if both parties were willing to adhere to it, I ſuſpect that any individual who found himſelf hurt by it, or the public proſecutor in name of the community at large, might proſecute the Doctors and the Surgeons for entering into ſuch a contract, or conſpiracy; and that the inſtant annulling of their contract, with the additional arguments of fine and impriſonment, would ſoon convince them of the iniquity, as well as the abſurdity, of what they had been doing.

Such a deciſion, I conceive, muſt reſult neceſſarily from the ſelf-evident *intereſt* and *natural right* of every individual patient, and of every perſon who has a chance of becoming a patient, that is, of all mankind, to the beſt aſſiſtance which can be given him by his phyſicians or ſurgeons; and the correſponding duty of theſe, to give to their patients the beſt help which they can give, and which their patients need; whether it be by ſeeing them once a-day, or once in ſeven days, or ſeven times in one day.

On the ſame principle of the plain intereſt and natural right of mankind to the beſt medical help they can procure when ſick, and the correſponding duty of phyſicians and ſurgeons, there can be no doubt that any contract between a phyſician and a ſurgeon, on

every

every occaſion to recommend one another, and to prevent, or endeavour to prevent, the calling in any other of the profeſſion, would be null in itſelf, as well as illiberal and diſgraceful to thoſe concerned in it. But a formal ſolemn contract between the two Royal Colleges, on the plauſible principles of Equality and Fraternity, by which every individual member of the one engaged, under a heavy penalty, to recommend and call in by rotation, for two months at a time, every individual member of the other, beſides being equally null in itſelf, is ſo extravagantly abſurd, that to conſider it minutely, would require more time and pains than ſuch an illuſtration can deſerve. Yet it would not be more abſurd or iniquitous, with reſpect to patients in general, than the real contract between the Managers and the Surgeons is with reſpect to the patients in the Surgeons Wards of the Royal Infirmary.

I am fully ſenſible that I am nowiſe qualified to do juſtice to the ſtrong argument which I have here in view. To diſcuſs it properly, ſo as to make the moſt of it, would require the talents, the knowledge, and the profeſſional habits of an able and experienced lawyer. It would even be of material conſequence to have it expreſſed with due preciſion and caution, and in proper legal terms; which as I know I cannot do, I will not even attempt; ſenſible as I am, that, by ſuch a fooliſh attempt, I ſhould not only bring ridicule and reproach on myſelf, but probably injure the good cauſe which I wiſh to ſerve.

Yet, truſting to the candour and indulgence of the Managers, and of any reſpectable lawyers whom they may chooſe to conſult, I ſhall ſtate my view of the queſtion, not as a legal argument, but as the rude materials for ſuch an argument, which any lawyer can eaſily put into proper legal form, ſo as to judge at once whether it be valid, or decently tenable, or not.

I know I can make myſelf perfectly underſtood by lawyers on ſuch a point; for I happen to be, from choice and taſte, as well ac-

quainted with the principles of ſtrict reaſoning (or what is called logic) as they are profeſſionally, and by a kind of neceſſity and habit. I know likewiſe that the ultimate general principles of ſtrict good logical reaſoning, are, and *muſt be*, the ſame at all times, and on all ſubjects whatever; for example, the ſame in Scotch law at preſent, as in Greek mathematics 2000 years ago. I know likewiſe, that, except in mathematical ſcience, there is no ſubject of reaſoning, in which the real uſe and ſtrict application of the principles of logic have been ſo well exemplified, and ſo much attended to, as in law. The *argument* of an able lawyer, in point of ſtrict reaſoning, is ſcarce inferior to the demonſtrations of *Euclid* and *Archimedes*. And if every cauſe had a *right* ſide, (which I believe is not the caſe), and if an able and well employed lawyer always got the right ſide of every cauſe that he undertook, (which I preſume is impoſſible), ſuch a lawyer would be not only as *ſtrict*, but as *candid*, and, in every reſpect, as *good* a reaſoner, as a mathematician, who is always engaged in the diſcovery of truth, and who knows that he never can eſtabliſh what is falſe; or obtain, as an able lawyer may often do, a wrong deciſion.

I know likewiſe how lawyers come to be good reaſoners; not as a part of ſcience, which in general they deſpiſe, and know nothing about; but juſt in the ſame way as an ancient ſage obſerved, that many rich idle profligate young Lords and Princes, who could do nothing elſe well, and would learn nothing elſe, yet learned to ride well, *becauſe their maſters did not flatter them*. Our lawyers find the beſt logic-maſters in their oppoſite counſel, who will no more flatter them, than as many vicious horſes would do, if the young lawyers ſhould dare to beſtride them, without knowing how to ride.

I know likewiſe that there is no myſtery or witchcraft in logic. When ſtripped of the uncouth and barbarous terms in which it has commonly been taught, or rather involved and concealed, it is perfectly intelligible, and ſatisfactory at once to every man of ſenſe.

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For nothing is good reaſoning or ſound logic, becauſe logicians have been pleaſed to call it ſo; but logicians have aſcertained and eſtabliſhed many fundamental principles of ſtrict and good reaſoning, becauſe, on the moſt careful examination and repeated trials, they have uniformly been found ſatisfactory and irreſiſtible by all men of ſenſe.

Theſe preliminaries I have thought it neceſſary to premiſe, before I ſtate *logically* that argument, which I am unable to ſtate *legally*, for want of ſufficient knowledge of the language of law.

The Managers will naturally apprehend, that I, an academical and ſpeculative man, am more likely to miſlead them, than to afford them any uſeful light on a nice and difficult ſubject, far remote from my own profeſſion and habits of life.

But of that there can be no danger. For, in the firſt place, they can eaſily judge for themſelves whether what I ſuggeſt to them be *ſenſe* or *nonſenſe*. If it be *nonſenſe*, they have no more to do with it. If it be *ſenſe*, then it muſt be the buſineſs of an able lawyer to judge whether it be or be not inconſiſtent with any eſtabliſhed point of law. If it be ſo, that point of law will of courſe be ſtated to us by our counſel; and we muſt conſider what is next to be done.

If my logical argument be *ſenſe*, and be not inconſiſtent with any eſtabliſhed point of law; then our counſel may either avail themſelves of it, putting it into proper legal form and language, or employ ſuch other better arguments as their own ſuperior knowledge ſhall ſuggeſt to them; ſo that my hints *may* do *good*, and certainly can do no harm.

My mode of reaſoning on the ſubject is this.

Our general propoſition is, " The contract between the Mana-
" gers and the Surgeons muſt be reduced, becauſe it is very bad
" for the patients." This it is incumbent on us to prove; for, however plauſible and rational it may appear, it is not, in ſtrict

logical

logical propriety, what is called a ſelf-evident truth; like the propoſitions, " A part is leſs than the whole;" " A man cannot be " in two places at once;" which it is plain can neither require nor admit of proof.

Our propoſition cannot be proved by teſtimony; for it is not a mere matter of fact, which men may know by the evidence of their ſenſes; like the fact that a perſon was generally believed the ſon of another perſon, or was or was not in Edinburgh on a particular day. Numberleſs ſuch facts, though remote from common obſervation and knowledge, may be well known to many individuals, competent witneſſes, whoſe teſtimony would eſtabliſh them in the moſt ſatisfactory manner. But our propoſition can neither be proved nor diſproved; that is, neither *it*, nor the *contrary* of it, which contrary we muſt ſuppoſe the Surgeons to maintain, can be eſtabliſhed by any ſuch evidence or teſtimony.

Such a general complicated propoſition as ours, (or its contrary), involving judgment, opinion, or inference, in point of law as well as of logic, can be judged of, and proved or diſproved, only by reſolving it into the *three* diſtinct propoſitions of which it conſiſts, and which, ſtated ſeparately and diſtinctly, conſtitute what is called in logic a ſyllogiſm or ſtrict argument.

Theſe three propoſitions are, 1. The more general one, called in logic the *Greater*.

2. The particular one, called the *Leſs*.

3. The concluſion, which, if *juſt*, follows evidently and neceſſarily from the other two; and, if *not juſt*, will be perceived at once not to follow from them.

In legal arguments, when reſolved in that way into the form of regular ſyllogiſms, the firſt or *greater* propoſition is the *law*, (real or ſuppoſed), whether common law, or ſtatute, or precedent, or ſome general principle of law or equity. The ſecond or *leſs* propoſition,

poſition, is the fact, (real or pretended). The concluſion, is the deciſion or judgment prayed for.

It is only with the two former propoſitions that lawyers have any trouble, and often they have a great deal of trouble to eſtabliſh one or both of them; but this being done with reſpect to both of them, the greater and the leſs, the concluſion follows of courſe. None of us ſurely ever heard of a lawyer ſo ignorant of his own trade, as well as of logic, that, granting him both the law and the fact as he ſtated them, he would not be entitled to a deciſion in his favour.

Our general propoſition, when reſolved into a ſyllogiſm, in the manner and on the principles juſt now ſtated, which I am ſure every lawyer, as well as every logician, will admit to be right, would ſtand thus:

1. Every contract between the Managers of the Infirmary and the Surgeons, with reſpect to their mode of attendance in it, which is *bad* for the patients, is unjuſt in itſelf, and ought to be reduced.

2. The preſent contract between the Managers and the Surgeons, by which every Member of their College is entitled to attend in the Hoſpital by rotation, is *bad* for the patients.

3. Therefore the preſent contract between the Managers and the Surgeons is unjuſt in itſelf, and ought to be reduced.

About the validity of this concluſion I ſhall give myſelf *no* trouble, being perfectly certain that no logician, or lawyer, or judge, or man of ſound judgment, who underſtands and admits the two former propoſitions, will diſpute it.

It muſt be one or both of the two former propoſitions; the greater, general, propoſition, or law; and the leſs, particular, propoſition, or fact; that any perſon *can* diſpute. Both of theſe we muſt prove, before we can eſtabliſh that concluſion for which we contend.

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As to the ſecond of them, the *leſs*, or the *fact*; like every other matter of fact, however general, and however much involving compariſon, and judgment, and profeſſional knowledge, and experience, and opinion, it can be proved in a ſatisfactory legal manner in a court of juſtice, only by proper teſtimony of a ſufficient number of competent witneſſes; that is, witneſſes not only of good character and good ſenſe, but of profeſſional knowledge and experience, well acquainted with the ſubject, and well qualified to judge of it.

On this kind of teſtimony in all profeſſional queſtions, the higheſt courts of juſtice, and the legiſlature itſelf, on the moſt important occaſions, are well accuſtomed to rely.

On the preſent occaſion, the important general fact which I have ſtated, may be eſtabliſhed at once, and with the utmoſt eaſe, by the moſt ample and unimpeached teſtimony. A cloud of witneſſes may eaſily be produced, whoſe concurrent teſtimony will fully confirm, and illuſtrate, and enforce all that I have ſaid of the evils reſulting from the ſyſtem of rotation. The witneſſes that I ſhould propoſe to call to prove the fact in queſtion are chiefly men of the medical profeſſion, and eſpecially the *individual Members of the College of Surgeons themſelves*, who have actually attended by rotation in the Hoſpital. To their teſtimony ſurely no objection can be made in any reſpect; and I do not believe there could be any eſſential difference among the anſwers which would be given ſeparately by them all, to a few plain, fair, preciſe queſtions relating to the general fact at iſſue.

The view which in the former part of this Memorial I have given of the evils *neceſſarily reſulting* from the ſyſtem of rotation, is by no means *inconſiſtent* with this mode of eſtabliſhing by ample teſtimony that ſuch evils have *actually been experienced* from it.

The relation between the two modes of proof is ſomewhat particular, and may deſerve attention.

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The former is a kind of *argument* founded on ſome of the moſt obvious and undeniable principles of human nature, and will be found ſatisfactory and convincing to all men of competent underſtanding and knowledge, who are accuſtomed to attend to general views, and deductions of reaſoning, even though very little or not at all acquainted with numberleſs minute particulars relating to the practice of ſurgery in an hoſpital, which muſt be familiar to profeſſional men, and which none but profeſſional men can properly judge of. It partakes of the nature of *demonſtration*; and, in point of force, approaches very near to it. It is a proof *independent* of experience, and which might have been given *prior* to experience, that ſuch evils were *to be expected*, and *muſt reſult* from the ſyſtem of the ſurgeons attending by rotation. I conceive it to be ſo very nearly a perfect demonſtration of the general truth which I wiſh to eſtabliſh, that, like the moſt perfect demonſtrations in ſcience, I mean thoſe of mathematics, it cannot be ſhaken or invalidated by any force of teſtimony: nor, *ſtrictly ſpeaking*, can it be *confirmed* by teſtimony.

But it by no means precludes teſtimony, either of the general nature and greatneſs of the evil in queſtion, or of the particular experience, obſervations, and ſentiments, of many individuals, the moſt competent judges, and the moſt unexceptionable witneſſes with reſpect to it.

Far from wiſhing to make ſuch an uſe of the general argument as to ſuperſede all particular teſtimony on the ſubject, I ſhould wiſh only to make an almoſt oppoſite and very modeſt uſe of it; to ſhow the juſtice and reaſonableneſs of our being allowed to prove, by competent teſtimony, the reality and the greatneſs of the evil whereof we complain, and of the nature and ſource of which we can give beforehand ſuch a diſtinct account, and ſuch plauſible evidence.

That kind of evidence, ſuppoſing it only plauſible, may be confirmed; if it be valid, as I believe it is, it cannot be refuted by any force of teſtimony.

My meaning and purpoſe in this diſtinction I hope will be eaſily underſtood: if I have not been fortunate enough to explain myſelf ſufficiently in general terms, I ſhall endeavour to make my meaning plain by a particular example and illuſtration.

It is uſual in trials for murder, to prove not only that the accuſed perſon inflicted a wound on the deceaſed and ſuppoſed murdered perſon, or gave him poiſon; but alſo that the wound ſo inflicted, or the poiſon ſo given by the accuſed, was *the cauſe* of the other perſon's death: elſe the crime of murder would not be proved againſt the culprit.

That eſſential point, of the wound or the poiſon being the cauſe of the death of the perſon to whom it was given, which, in ſtrict propriety, is but a *matter of opinion*, founded on ſome degree of knowledge, more or leſs particular or general, of human nature, and of the effects of ſuch cauſes, is uſually eſtabliſhed by the teſtimony of ſurgeons and phyſicians, whoſe education and profeſſional habits entitle them to the credit of knowing more of ſuch things than other people do.

In ſome caſes the queſtion of fact or opinion, to be decided by the teſtimony of the gentlemen of the Faculty, is very nice and difficult: they may give different or contradictory teſtimonies with reſpect to it; or they may all agree, when ſeparately examined, in declaring on oath that they think it a very doubtful matter.

But in many caſes the Faculty are, and *muſt* be unanimous in their clear and deciſive teſtimony, that the wound inflicted or the poiſon given was certainly the cauſe of the death of the perſon deceaſed.

For

For example, when a man, juſt before, to all appearance, in perfect health, is ſhot through the head with a piſtol-bullet, or is ſtabbed to the heart with a ſword or a pike, and dies immediately; or when ſuch a man gets a quarter of an ounce of arſenic mixed with his food, and dies in a day or two with ſymptoms of moſt violent diſorder in his ſtomach, and when on opening his body ſome portion of the arſenic is found in his ſtomach, and his ſtomach itſelf is found to have been inflamed and mortified; in ſuch caſes there can be no real difference of opinion among the Faculty. Every intelligent judge, or juryman, or lawyer, and indeed every man of competent knowledge of human nature, or what we call common ſenſe, could at once anticipate the anſwer which every man of the medical profeſſion would give to any queſtion put to him concerning the *cauſe* of the death of a perſon who had received ſuch a wound, or ſwallowed ſuch a doſe of poiſon.

Nay more; if any medical witneſs, when examined in ſuch a caſe, were to give a contrary teſtimony, this would excite immediately the greateſt aſtoniſhment, perhaps even ſome indignation, and much diſtruſt; and certainly would bring upon him ſeveral very pointed queſtions concerning the reaſons of his very ſingular opinion: by his anſwers to which it would ſoon appear what regard was due to his teſtimony, and what opinion ought to be entertained of himſelf.

I ſhould ſuſpect even, that, in ſuch a caſe, though no medical witneſſes could be found, the evidence, on the plain principle of common ſenſe, would be deemed complete as to the *cauſe* of the death, ſuppoſing only the fact, of the inflicting of the wounds, or the giving of the poiſon, to be eſtabliſhed by competent evidence. I am ſure it ought to be ſo.

Nay more, in the caſe ſtated, if ten or a dozen medical witneſſes were produced on the trial, and all of them, when examined, declared upon oath, that the ſhot through the head, the ſtab through

the heart, or the doſe of arſenic taken into the ſtomach, was *not the cauſe* of the perſon's death, or at leaſt in their opinion was not ſo; I ſuſpect their teſtimony would go for nothing, and that the gentlemen of the Faculty would find themſelves in a very bad ſcrape, unleſs they could aſſign ſtrong reaſons for holding an opinion ſo repugnant to general experience and common ſenſe.

The general notion which the more judicious and better informed part of mankind have of ſuch things, though in one reſpect it renders ſuperfluous, by no means ſuperſedes the production of proper teſtimony with reſpect to them in any formal judicial proceedings. On the contrary, it ſuggeſts the proper queſtions to be put to witneſſes; *firſt*, As to their opinion or belief; *ſecondly*, As to the reaſons or ground of their belief; which reaſons it is as important for the court to know as their belief itſelf.

Now the application of all this to our caſe is plain and obvious.

The general notion which the more judicious and better informed part of mankind entertain with reſpect to what is *good* or *bad* for the patients, in the mode of attendance of hoſpital-ſurgeons, is as uniform and clear, as well eſtabliſhed, and as well known, as their general notion and belief with reſpect to a mortal wound, or a deadly poiſon.

It has been teſtified, times innumerable, in the moſt public and authentic manner.

The permanent appointment of ſurgeons and phyſicians in other hoſpitals; the expreſs terms of our charter; the original appointment of a few permanent Surgeons to this Hoſpital; the means by which it was overturned; the permanent appointment of two Phyſicians to this Hoſpital, after twenty years experience of the attendance of all the Fellows of their College in rotation; the attempts, however feeble and ineffectual, which, after many years ſad experience of it, have been made by the Managers, to get rid of the attendance of the Surgeons in rotation: all theſe things

ſhew

ſhew beyond diſpute what the general opinion of ſuch a mode of attendance has been.

I have taken care to ſpecify moſt preciſely, and to illuſtrate very fully, the reaſons of that general opinion and belief.

I am prepared to ſupport it by moſt ample and unexceptionable teſtimony. I have very ſtrong reaſons, and I have mentioned what my reaſons are, for thinking that no contrary teſtimony ever will or can be given. But if, contrary to all reaſonable expectation, any ſuch contrary teſtimony ſhould be given, the ſimple and obvious expedient, which is fully warranted by law and general practice, of aſking the reaſons of ſuch a peculiar belief, will ſoon aſcertain what regard is due to ſuch teſtimony; juſt as would happen, by the ſame means, if any ſtrange teſtimony, inconſiſtent with general experience and well-eſtabliſhed belief, were given with reſpect to the effects of arſenic, or of a ſhot through the head.

With theſe remarks I end the conſideration of the *ſecond* or *leſs* propoſition of our *ſyllogiſm*, " That the preſent mode of the at-" tendance of the Surgeons by rotation is very bad for the pa-" tients." Thoſe whom it concerns, may, as they ſhall think beſt for *their* cauſe, either admit it, which will ſave ſome trouble, or deny it, and let it come to proof, which will eſtabliſh it more fully and more ſtrongly than the arguments, the illuſtrations, and the declared belief or teſtimony of any one individual can be expected to do.

SECTION V.

IT remains for me next to conſider and to prove the firſt or *greater* propoſition of *our* ſyllogiſm, " That every contract between the " Managers of the Royal Infirmary and the Surgeons, with reſpect

" to

" to their mode of attendance in it, which is *bad* for the patients,
" is unjuſt in itſelf, and ought to be reduced."

I am aware that this is the moſt important point in our cauſe, and the moſt difficult propoſition in our argument.

But it is, I preſume, one great ſtep towards gaining our end, to ſhow, as may eaſily be done, and I truſt is already done in this Memorial, that the contract in queſtion, whether directly repugnant to any law or not, is at leaſt abſurd, unjuſt, and cruel. Nothing leſs than direct and poſitive experience, I mean the ſolemn deciſion of a court of juſtice, can make me believe that the law of this country will ever ſanction abſurdity, injuſtice, and cruelty, by confirming ſuch a contract.

I conceive it is ſomething even to have ſhown, that, in order to ſupport, or contend for ſuch a contract, it is neceſſary to deny directly, and in plain terms, the ſeemingly ſelf-evident truth, which I am now to conſider and to eſtabliſh, as the *greater* propoſition of our ſtrict argument, or the law in our cauſe. To *deny it*, is, in other words, to *aſſert* the very ſhocking propoſition directly contradictory to it, " That a contract between the Ma-
" nagers and the Surgeons, though bad for the patients, cannot be
" reduced, and is not unjuſt."

I do not believe, nor, without poſitive experience of the fact, can I ever believe, that any individual, or any ſet of men will explicitly avow and aſſert ſuch a propoſition. Not therefore as meaning to impute it to the Surgeons, but as obliged in the conduct of this argument, to take nothing for granted that can either require or admit of proof, and eſpecially to take nothing for granted that is favourable to our cauſe, I muſt conſider it as what may be maintained by them, or in their name by their counſel learned in the law; with whom it is a point of honour, and indeed of profeſſional and moral duty, to give up *no* argument, however unpopular, ungracious, or ſhocking, which can avail their clients.

In

In this caſe, to give up *that* ungracious argument, would be to give up their cauſe altogether; for we know already, and many or all of them know as well as we do, and are as ready to acknowledge as we can be to aſſert, that their attendance in the Hoſpital by rotation is *very bad* for the patients. This being either admitted, or proved, there remains no other argument or plea on which they *can* reſt their cauſe, except the very ſhocking one to which I here allude.

This is one of the advantages which we gain by dividing or reſolving the general complicated argument into its ſimple, eſſential, conſtituent parts. But when we do this, we muſt be prepared, not only for what probably will be maintained, but for the *worſt* that by any means *can* be maintained againſt us.

In the firſt place, I muſt obſerve, that the propoſition which I have now to eſtabliſh, " That every contract between the Mana-" gers of the Infirmary and the Surgeons, with reſpect to their " mode of attendance in it, which is bad for the patients, is unjuſt " in itſelf, and ought to be reduced," appears to me a *ſelf-evident truth.*

I conceive it to be ſo plain a truth as can ſcarce be ſuppoſed to require, though indirectly it may well admit of proof; but withal of ſuch a kind that it may not only admit of, but require very mature conſideration and ample illuſtration; for as it is very general in its nature, and extenſive in its application, no man of ſenſe ought to admit it as ſelf-evident, without firſt examining it carefully; and as it is no common, it cannot be an eaſy, object of attention.

I truſt it will appear plain and evident to all who ſhall conſider it carefully, and eſpecially to lawyers and judges, if they attend ſtrictly to two things; *firſt*, To the charitable end and purpoſe for which this Infirmary was eſtabliſhed, and the ſtrict limitation of the powers of the Managers, by the expreſs terms of our charter, to ſuch *things as may beſt conduce to that charitable end and purpoſe*;

2dly,

2dly, To what that *badneſs* is to which I here allude, which I have already in ſome meaſure explained, and which I undertake to prove and eſtabliſh by the moſt deciſive evidence.

The *badneſs* in queſtion is not like the badneſs of a mercantile tranſaction, implying or conſiſting in *loſs* where *profit* was expected; it is no kind of pecuniary loſs by a diſadvantageous or fooliſh bargain. It is *badneſs* relative to ſomething of much higher importance and more intereſting concern, which never can be appretiated in money; and which, if with-held or impaired, cannot be compenſated by money; it is *badneſs* relative to that aſſiſtance which ought to be given to numberleſs individuals, poor and unhappy, in their utmoſt need, when health and life are at ſtake with them; *that* health and *that* life, which are their little all; on which they and their families muſt depend for their ſupport; and which are ineſtimable to themſelves, to their families, and to their country.

No pecuniary advantage to the funds of the Hoſpital can compenſate ſuch badneſs, or ſuch want of the beſt aſſiſtance which can be procured.

The Managers ſurely are not only truſtees for the property of the Hoſpital, but alſo guardians of the health and lives of the poor and unhappy who are admitted into it. This is their firſt and ſupreme duty, to which the other part of their office is evidently ſubordinate. For that purpoſe unqueſtionably the Hoſpital was inſtituted; and to it the funds of the Hoſpital are deſtined. Nor are the Managers entitled to barter the health or life, or even the chance of the health or life, of one poor man, for any ſum of money that *can be* offered them.

If it were propoſed in any contract with the Phyſicians or Surgeons, to expreſs, in plain terms, that, in conſideration of a certain ſum of money paid by them to the Hoſpital, the Managers, on their part, agreed to accept from them *worſe* or *leſs good* profeſſional aſſiſtance to the patients, than they had had from them before; juſt

juſt as the Managers may agree to accept of 4½ inſtead of 5 per cent. for L. 1000 lent out on good ſecurity; the abſurdity, injuſtice, and cruelty of ſuch a contract muſt, I think, be glaring and ſhocking. I cannot believe that any ſet of Managers, or Phyſicians, or Surgeons, would ever make, any Lawyer ever ſanction, any Court of Juſtice ever tolerate, ſuch an abominable contract.

Is a contract more tolerable, more tenable, or leſs cruel, leſs unjuſt, leſs abſurd, which, without expreſſing in words that hateful condition, neceſſarily implies it in fact?

I underſtand and admit, that the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, by their charter, have as full power as any other incorporation, or as any individual, to make contracts with other incorporations, or with individuals. I conceive that a deliberate formal contract between them and the Surgeons, relative to property, whether advantageous to the Hoſpital or diſadvantageous to it, muſt be as valid, as ſuch a contract between the Royal Bank of Scotland and the Good Town of Edinburgh, about the loan of a ſum of money.

But the patients in the Royal Infirmary are not the property of the Managers, nor of the Surgeons either: nor can they ever be made property, or ſold or bartered as if they were: nor can the Managers ever acquire a right of diſpoſing even of a ſingle limb of a poor man admitted into the Hoſpital, to the higheſt bidder among the Surgeons, or to any bidder, on any other principle or conſideration, or for any other purpoſe, but for the utmoſt benefit which can be procured for that poor man, according to the beſt of their judgment.

So far are the *patients* in the Infirmary from being the property either of the *Managers*, or of the medical gentlemen employed by them, that on the contrary the Managers are a kind of truſtees or agents for *them*, expreſsly for the purpoſe of procuring them all the comforts and benefits which can be procured and are moſt needful

to them; and, above all, the beſt medical aſſiſtance: and the Phyſicians and Surgeons employed by the Managers to give their profeſſional aſſiſtance to the patients in the Hoſpital, are, to this purpoſe and effect, as much the *ſervants* of thoſe patients as they are of their richeſt patients in private practice, who pay them the moſt liberally for their ſervices. They owe juſt the ſame care and attention and aſſiſtance to a poor man in the Hoſpital, as to a rich Lord in a palace: and would be juſt as blameable, and as criminal, if they voluntarily neglected any part of their profeſſional duty to the poor man, as if they did ſo to the rich.

Perhaps it will be thought to ſavour too ſtrongly of the pedantry of my own profeſſion to ſay, that I conceive the *duty* of the Managers of the Hoſpital to the patients admitted into it, to be very near akin to that of a phyſician to his patients. Nevertheleſs, as the latter is preciſely defined, and well and generally underſtood among phyſicians, and even familiar to every man of competent judgment and knowledge though not of the medical profeſſion; and as it ſerves better than any thing elſe which I know of, to explain what I have here in view; I ſhall venture to make uſe of it to illuſtrate and eſtabliſh the proper notion of the former duty; that of the Managers of the Infirmary, the nature of which is leſs generally underſtood; as might naturally have been expected, for a very obvious reaſon, that it is not a common object of attention and experience.

What I have particularly at heart is, to ſhew, that belonging to certain profeſſions, or ſtations, or offices of truſt, there are certain *duties*, which in their own nature, or from the nature of things, are *ſupreme* and *indefeaſible*; which no individual, and no ſet of men, can, either for themſelves or their ſucceſſors, violate, or renounce, or neglect, without ſubſtantial *injuſtice*: ſuch injuſtice as law might prevent, or undo, or perhaps puniſh, but never can be ſuppoſed to ſanction and enforce. Conſequently, every contract implying ſuch violation

violation or renunciation of duty, and ſuch ſubſtantial injuſtice, muſt be null and void, and muſt be reduced or ſet aſide by a court of juſtice.

The duty of a phyſician to his patients is expreſſed (in the *oath* taken in this Univerſity by thoſe who are promoted to the degree of Doctor of Medicine, implying always a general licence to practiſe phyſic) in the following terms: "To practiſe phyſic, cautiouſ-" ly, chaſtely, and honeſtly; and faithfully to procure (or do) all " things conducive to the health of the bodies of the ſick; and " laſtly, never, without weighty reaſons, to divulge any thing " which ought to be concealed, that he heard or ſaw in the exer-" ciſe of his profeſſion."

The ſame or a ſimilar oath, which is taken in ſubſtance from the oath propoſed by Hippocrates more than 2000 years ago, I believe, is adminiſtered, in all univerſities where medicine is taught, to thoſe who are created Doctors, and licenſed to practiſe. But even if it were omitted, as I ſuſpect it is in ſome places, it makes no difference as to the *ſupreme* and *indefeaſible duty* of a phyſician to his patients, implied by the very act of his practiſing as a phyſician. In common ſenſe, and juſtice, and I ſhould think in law too, he is bound to do all thoſe duties to the utmoſt of his power. He would be blameable, and in many caſes, I think, would be ſeverely puniſhable, if he did not. But in no caſe that I can ſuppoſe, can I conceive that he can legally or juſtly violate, or neglect, or renounce, any one of thoſe duties; all of which every patient expects, and has a right to expect, and to receive from his phyſician. Any contract to this effect, even for value received on the part of the Doctor, I ſhould think not merely an abſurdity and a nullity, but a downright outrage on juſtice and common ſenſe; nor can I conceive that ſuch a contract ſhould ever be brought into a court of juſtice, unleſs at the inſtance of the injured patient, in order to

get one or both of the contracting parties ſeverely puniſhed for their knavery.

Even the *leaſt* of the duties of a phyſician which are ſpecified in our oath, and univerſally underſtood, independently of any oath, to be the *duty* of a phyſician, and conſequently the *right* of his patients and their families, I mean ſecrecy on his part with reſpect to every thing ſeen or heard by him in the courſe of his profeſſional attendance, which ought not to be divulged, can never be juſtly or legally renounced or violated by any contract, for any conſideration whatever, even in a ſingle inſtance, either to gratify a curious impertinent, or to ſerve the intereſted purpoſes of a ſelfiſh knave. Surely no lawyer will ever maintain that ſuch a contract could be enforced by law, or, without the moſt ridiculous abſurdity, be even pleaded in a court of juſtice.

Yet *that* duty, I think, may fairly be called the *leaſt* of them; not only as being the leaſt important of them all, but alſo on account of this obvious conſideration, that it evidently is not *ſupreme:* there are other duties, of higher authority, to which *it* muſt yield, whenever it happens to be oppoſed to them. To ſuch ſuperior duties the clauſe in that part of our oath which relates to ſecrecy, " never " *without weighty reaſons* to divulge," evidently relates; and expreſsly admits an exception in favour of them. For example, when in the courſe of judicial proceedings the teſtimony of a phyſician is required, perhaps with reſpect to ſuch things ſeen or heard in the courſe of his practice, as it would have been moſt his *wiſh*, and, but for his being called on as a witneſs, it would have been moſt his *duty* to have kept concealed; it inſtantly becomes his *ſuperior* or *only duty* to declare them fully, perhaps in open court. Even though not called on as a witneſs, if at any time he knows that his divulging ſuch things, as but for ſtrong reaſons he ought to conceal, would do any ſubſtantial good, or prevent any great evil, which is nearly the ſame thing, it is unqueſtionably his *duty* to divulge

vulge them. The only difference that I can ſee between the two caſes is, that, in the former, when called on as a witneſs, he has no choice, no opportunity for deliberation, or exerciſe of his own judgment and diſcretion, and conſequently no kind of reſponſibility for what may come of the teſtimony legally required of him. In the other caſe, when he acts voluntarily, he is in ſome meaſure reſponſible for the conſequences of his breach of that ſecrecy, which, in general, is expected of him, as his profeſſional duty. If he acts uprightly, to the beſt of his judgment, I conceive his probity cannot be impeached, but his judgment may; if he acts raſhly and fooliſhly in ſo important a concern, and if his raſh and improper conduct, though well meant, has been injurious to others, he is certainly in juſtice bound, and, I preſume, might be compelled by law, to make them adequate compenſation.

But a contract or obligation, for value received, to make known, even to one individual, thoſe family-ſecrets which a phyſician may often know, and ought in general to conceal, is not only null and void, but *criminal;* as being a violation or renunciation of a moral and profeſſional duty; and every particular act done in conſequence of it would be puniſhable; and the doer of ſuch a wrong would be obliged to make reparation to the injured party. Nay, if he ſhould eſcape legal puniſhment, becauſe the injured party would not proſecute, the mere general knowledge that a phyſician had made ſuch a diſgraceful contract, would ſoon bring upon him a moſt effectual puniſhment, and one which would put it out of his power to fulfil his ſhameful bargain.

It would no doubt be thought mere trifling to conſider minutely the ſuppoſition of a contract made by a phyſician, for any value received, to violate his profeſſional duties of practiſing phyſic *chaſtely* and *honeſtly;* or to ſet about ſhewing the abſurdity, the nullity, and the criminality of every ſuch contract; for chaſtity and honeſty are general moral duties, not peculiarly belonging to any one profeſſion,

and,

and, however often violated, at leaſt abundantly well underſtood by all mankind. An obligation or contract to act as a knave can ſcarce be conceived; and ſtill leſs, if poſſible, can it be ſuppoſed to be enforced by law.

But I muſt beg leave to conſider the *duty* of *caution* in his practice, as one peculiar to a phyſician; one very important in itſelf, yet not ſtrictly definable, foraſmuch as it admits of conſiderable latitude, and even ſome deviation from what is underſtood to be the ſtricteſt caution; while yet any great, voluntary, unneceſſary, or ſyſtematic violation of it, is notoriouſly wrong at leaſt, if not criminal. Above all, I think it deſerves attention, on account of its ſtriking affinity to one great part of the duty of the managers of an hoſpital; which duty they can no more renounce or legally violate, with reſpect to the ſick poor admitted into the hoſpital, than a Phyſician can by contract diveſt himſelf of his duty of caution in his practice with reſpect to any one, or all of his own patients, either in the hoſpital or in private practice.

By *caution* on the part of a Phyſician in his practice, nothing can be meant but *care not to expoſe his patients to any unneceſſary danger.*

It is not, I truſt, ſuppoſed by any perſon of competent knowledge and underſtanding, that either phyſic or ſurgery can be practiſed without *ſome danger* to the ſick.

It is avowed that many operations in ſurgery are immediately dangerous to life. And even in the practice of phyſic, it muſt be admitted that many of our moſt powerful remedies are in ſome meaſure dangerous. The more powerful they are, that is, the greater effects they produce on the human body, the more dangerous muſt they become when they are improperly uſed; when ſuch effects as they produce are either not wanted, or cannot be borne. The precarious effects of many remedies, ſometimes great, ſometimes ſcarce perceptible, different in different individuals, nay often in the ſame individual

individual at different times, greatly increaſe the danger of the practice of phyſic.

The great and urgent danger in many diſeaſes requires indiſpenſably the immediate uſe of very dangerous remedies; and of theſe often in very unfavourable circumſtances, where we have but a ſmall chance of doing good by them.

The want of ſuch powerful and certain remedies as abound in every newſpaper, and can be found nowhere elſe, for many painful and mortal diſtempers, leads us moſt juſtifiably, and almoſt inevitably, on many occaſions, to try new remedies; which either our own reflections and reaſonings ſuggeſt to us as proper, and at leaſt worthy to be tried; or which are recommended to us in ſuch caſes by the teſtimony of others, on whoſe veracity, and judgment, and knowledge, we can rely. Such *experiments*, in numberleſs caſes, are not blameable, for they are neceſſary: *ſic enim medicina orta; ſubinde, aliorum ſalute, aliorum interitu, pernicioſa diſcernens a ſalutaribus.*

The more powerful any new remedy is, the more dangerous will it be; eſpecially till all the circumſtances relating to the adminiſtration of it are well aſcertained.

From all theſe cauſes combined, there reſults much inevitable danger in the practice of phyſic. From this acknowledged danger reſults the important duty of caution in a phyſician, or care to make the danger as little as poſſible.

What then, it may reaſonably be aſked, is the degree or meaſure of that caution which is the duty of a phyſician?

I have never known, nor can I well conceive, any other rule of conduct on this nice medical point, but the ſimple and comprehenſive religious and moral precept, "*To do to others as we would that* "*they ſhould do unto us.*"

Nothing can be eaſier than to apply this maxim in the practice of phyſic. Whatever a Phyſician or Surgeon does, or adviſes to be done, honeſtly intended for the good of his patient, and what he would

would wiſh to be done to himſelf, or to thoſe who are deareſt to him, if he or they were in the ſame ſituation with his patient, is not only innocent on his part, but right, and what it is his bounden duty to do, whether the danger of it be greater or leſs. The remedy adviſed by the Phyſician may be a ſevere and dangerous chirurgical operation; it may be a violent and precarious medicine, the danger of which had been long known; or it may be a new, and rough, and ſeemingly dangerous piece of practice, of which he had had no experience, but which he propoſed to try, on the recommendation of others, or from ſome uncertain notion of his own, concerning the nature and cauſe of the diſeaſe, and the means moſt likely to remove it. Yet the remedy, with all its danger, may be the beſt or only chance, or, what comes to the ſame thing, the only chance known to the Phyſician, which the patient has for his life. It is equally the *duty* of the Phyſician to give him that chance, whether it be 100 to 1, or only 1 in 100 in his favour.

There may even, in many caſes, be peculiar merit and virtue in the conduct of a Phyſician, who employs a very dangerous remedy, in order to give his patient a *chance* for recovery, in a ſituation otherwiſe almoſt or altogether hopeleſs, foraſmuch as he does it at the moſt imminent riſk of his own fame and fortune. In ſuch circumſtances, it is much more probable that the patient will die than that he ſhall recover; and it is always poſſible, and often very probable, that he ſhall die evidently in conſequence of the operation performed, or by the violent effects of the remedy employed. Whenever this is known to happen, a very reſpectable majority of mankind, taking them by tale and not by weight, I mean the vulgar, the ignorant, the envious, the malicious, and the intereſted, will not fail to blame the Phyſician for the death of his patient.

It is the urgent neceſſity of the caſe, and his upright intention

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of doing what was beſt for his patient, which alone can be his juſtification.

If he adminiſtered or preſcribed ſuch a medicine with intention to kill the perſon to whom it was given, and this perſon died in conſequence of taking it, the Doctor would certainly be guilty of wilful murder.

If, without neceſſity, he gave ſuch a dangerous medicine to any patient, merely to gratify his own curioſity, or zeal for ſcience, as he may chooſe to call it; for example, in order to try the effects of new medicines, or to aſcertain the comparative advantages and diſadvantages of ſome new modes of practice, either contrived by himſelf, or ſuggeſted by others; he would be guilty of a very high miſdemeanour, and a great breach of truſt towards his patient; for which, I preſume, he might be ſeverely puniſhed, eſpecially if the latter died, in conſequence of ſuch a dangerous experiment tried on him, without his knowledge, and without neceſſity.

Such of the Managers as are of the medical profeſſion cannot fail to know, but others of them may need to be told, that there is a kind of diſeaſe or crazineſs on this point among many phyſicians, who are in other reſpects men of talents, and of real worth. But from an exceſſive zeal for their ſcience, and in ſome caſes, as I ſuſpect, from an erroneous or very confuſed notion of what conſtitutes medical ſcience, they are always making experiments, yet never make any diſcoveries, always propoſing new remedies and new modes of practice, yet never make any improvements.

Thoſe to whom this ſubject is new may form ſome notion of the ardent zeal of ſome of theſe votaries of medical ſcience, and may be entertained as well as inſtructed, when they are informed that many of them have long perſiſted in trying ſevere and dangerous experiments on their own perſons: That one of them, wiſhing to aſcertain the medicinal effects of camphor, took at one

doſe ſuch a quantity of it, that his ſenſes failed him, and he was very near dead; and muſt have died in good earneſt, but for the lucky accident of the Phyſician who was called to his aſſiſtance when he was ſpeechleſs, caſting his eyes on the papers which lay on his patient's table, and which contained an account of the experiments that he had been trying: That one of the moſt eminent Surgeons, and moſt ingenious men, that this age or country has produced, deliberately inoculated himſelf, by means of a lancet dipped in the *proper* matter, with the venereal diſeaſe, and kept himſelf thoroughly tainted with that loathſome diſtemper for about *three years*, that he might have the ſatisfaction of obſerving the regular progreſs of it through every part of his body: That another very ingenious man of our profeſſion, in order to aſcertain the effects of different kinds of food on the human body, lived for two months or more on bread and water; then for ſome time on roaſt gooſe; then on ſuet; then on ſugar; and at laſt fairly died upon Cheſhire cheeſe. But hundreds or thouſands of experiments, more or leſs ſevere or dangerous, have been tried by Phyſicians and Surgeons on their own bodies, without the leaſt neceſſity, and purely from their zeal for ſcience.

To *ſuch* experiments, I preſume, no reaſonable objection can be made. If thoſe who make them chooſe to go out of the world that way, I doubt whether any body has a right, and ſurely no body can have any inclination, to ſtop them. But it is not quite ſo clear to me that they have any right at all to ſend their patients out of the world that way, who, forty to one, have no ſuch zeal for ſcience, no ambition for that crown of martyrdom, and who probably have not the leaſt wiſh to go out of the world at that time, and actually employ and pay their Phyſicians for the very oppoſite purpoſe.

It will naturally, and very juſtly, be taken for granted, that ſome at leaſt of our Faculty, who are ſo ready to try experiments

ments on their own bodies, would be very apt, whenever they had an opportunity, to try ſimilar experiments on the bodies of their patients. It is a melancholy truth, but it cannot be denied. All I can ſay for the honour of my profeſſional brethren is, that the moſt reſpectable of them have always reprobated ſuch conduct as ſeverely as the reſt of mankind do. Our medical phraſe of reproach and contempt for it, *Corio humano ludere*, (to play with the human hide), abundantly teſtifies in what abomination it has generally been held by our Faculty; and it is needleſs to enter into particulars. But to ſhow what I mean, I ſhall mention one inſtance, which may perhaps ſtartle ſome men of weak nerves, and little uſed to ſuch things. Some of the medical profeſſion, out of pure love of ſcience, and without the leaſt neceſſity, have taken ſmall-pox matter from the dead body of one who died of the worſt kind of the diſeaſe, and have inoculated with it. A dead body, half putrid, has been dug out of the grave where it had lain for ſome days, and ſmall-pox matter has been taken from it for the ſame purpoſe.

When a Phyſician, purely from zeal for ſcience, tries ſuch experiments on his patients, he ſurely is not *guiltleſs*. But what ſhould we think of one, who, without any ſuch burning zeal for ſcience, and merely for value received, entered into a contract with another perſon of ſuch a character, who perhaps had more experiments to try than patients to try them on, and agreed to try on *his* patients all the experiments which the other ſhould propoſe to him? Surely the abſurdity and nullity, as well as the injuſtice of ſuch a contract, muſt be glaring. It is impoſſible that it could ever be enforced by a court of juſtice, or even pleaded by a lawyer; yet to improve ſcience of every kind is laudable, eſpecially in the way of experiment, which is the ſureſt or only way in which the ſcience of nature can be improved: And it is peculiarly meritorious to improve the ſcience and the art of phyſic, becauſe it is

immediately beneficial to mankind, and eſpecially to thoſe whom diſeaſe hath perhaps in a moment cut off from the number of the happy.

What then could vitiate a contract for the improvement of ſo beneficial a ſcience in that way? Plainly this, that even ſo great a good ought not to be purchaſed or procured by the violation of a moral duty. It is right for a Phyſician to improve his ſcience; but it is much more right for him to do his duty to his patients. As ſoon as the two *rights* are ſet in oppoſition, it inſtantly appears, beyond diſpute, which of the two is ſubordinate, and which ſupreme. The difference in point of force or authority is infinite; the two claims admit of no compariſon; the one may be enforced by law, the other not; the violation of the one *right* could at the worſt be matter only of regret, and perhaps of diſapprobation; the neglect or violation of the other might juſtly be a ſubject of puniſhment.

I truſt it will not appear a paradox to ſay, that by ſuch a contract as I have ſuppoſed, in which, for a valuable conſideration received, a Phyſician engaged to try on his patients all the experiments which one of his more ſcientific and leſs practical brethren propoſed to him, he could neither in conſcience be expected, nor by law be required or compelled, to do any thing to his patients, but what it would equally have been his duty to have done to them, if he had received no ſuch valuable conſideration, and if no ſuch contract had ever been made. Whatever was beſt for his patients, it was his indiſpenſable profeſſional duty to do for them. Whatever was bad, or unneceſſarily dangerous for them, it was his duty not to do; and both theſe duties were with him ſupreme and indefeaſible.

The application of all that I have ſaid, with reſpect to the *duty* of *caution* on the part of a Phyſician towards his patients, is ſo obvious, and ſo eaſy to the correſponding *duty* of the Managers of

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an Hoſpital, that I almoſt doubt whether I ought to expreſs it in words.

Whatever it is the duty of Phyſicians or Surgeons to *do* to their patients, it is the duty of the Managers of an Hoſpital to *procure* for the ſick poor who are admitted into it.

Whatever it is the duty of Phyſicians or Surgeons *not to do* to their patients, it is the duty of the Managers *not to permit* in their Hoſpital.

It would be as fooliſh, and as truly a moral wrong, on the part of the Managers, to forbid and prevent, in *every* caſe, *all* dangerous operations, *all* dangerous remedies, *all* experiments or trials of new remedies, in their Hoſpital, as it would be for Phyſicians and Surgeons to reſolve *never* to perform ſuch operations, or preſcribe ſuch remedies, or try ſuch experiments. It is equally the duty of the Managers to procure, as it is of the Phyſicians and Surgeons to do whatever is *beſt* for the patients. Their duties are co-extended and limited exactly by the ſame conſiderations.

If the Managers, out of their abundant and very laudable zeal for the improvement of medical ſcience, ſhould grant a formal permiſſion to the Phyſicians and Surgeons to try on their Hoſpital patients whatever experiments they thought requiſite for that purpoſe, however unneceſſary and dangerous to the patients on whom they were tried, there can be no doubt that thoſe who gave, and thoſe who accepted ſuch a permiſſion, and acted according to the tenor of it, would equally be guilty of a high miſdemeanour; the former unqueſtionably guilty of a breach of truſt; the latter guilty of a breach of profeſſional duty: and if any patients chanced to die under ſuch a courſe of experiments, which I preſume would not be a very rare occurrence, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect both the high-contracting parties would be guilty of culpable homicide, the one as principals, the other as acceſſories before the fact.

But

But if ſuch an unlimited permiſſion to make experiments on the ſick in the Hoſpital were granted in the form of a contract with the medical gentlemen, in conſideration of a good round ſum of money paid by them to the Managers, the atrocity of ſuch a contract would preclude all controverſies about it. The Managers certainly would not be permitted to expoſe the patients to ſuch a danger.

Is it not equally the duty of the Managers to preſerve the ſick poor in the Hoſpital from every other danger? Or can the moſt lively imagination conceive any kind of danger, from which it would *not* be the *duty* of the Managers, if it were in their *power*, to protect and preſerve them?

It would be unreaſonable and uncandid to ſay, that the danger of trying a new Phyſician or Surgeon with them, every two months, is as great as that of trying a new remedy; and that to truſt the lives of the patients to Phyſicians or Surgeons, who have grown old without acquiring general eſteem, or confidence, or employment, would be as dangerous as to truſt them to the efficacy of remedies which had been introduced into practice, and after a long trial had been laid aſide as uſeleſs or bad.

Modeſt merit, from unfavourable circumſtances, may pine, from youth to age, in obſcurity, contempt, and poverty; and a young man of extraordinary talents and application may, from his firſt outſet in his profeſſion, be much ſuperior even to his own maſter. But it would be ſtill more unreaſonable and uncandid, and, I ſhould think, would ſavour ſomewhat of inſanity, to aſſert that the want of experience, and the want of public eſteem and confidence, afforded any preſumption in favour of a Phyſician or Surgeon, or to maintain that there was no more danger to the patients entruſted to the care of ſuch practitioners, than to thoſe committed to the care of men of ample experience, and the higheſt profeſſional character.

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The danger in queſtion muſt, no doubt, appear more or leſs formidable to different perſons; nor can it ever be exactly meaſured: but it is unqueſtionably *real*, and it is *great*. Be it greater or leſs, be it ten to one, or only one in ten, againſt the ſick, it is unneceſſary; and it is the duty of the Managers to preſerve them from it.

SECTION VI.

LEAVING now this important duty of *caution* with reſpect to the ſick, which is evidently common to the Managers and to the medical attendants of an hoſpital, and equally incumbent on both in their reſpective departments of *doing* or *procuring*; let us next conſider the duty of Phyſicians, " faithfully to do all things con-" ducive to the health of the bodies of the ſick," and the cloſe affinity between it and the correſponding duty of the Managers of an hoſpital, ' to do every thing that may *beſt conduce* to the chari-" table end and purpoſe" of their inſtitution; and, above all, to procure for the ſick in the hoſpital the *beſt* aſſiſtance which medical men *can* give them.

Both theſe duties are ſo plain and obvious, ſo near akin, ſo evidently indiſpenſable and co-extended; and, if in ſtrict propriety they may be ſaid to be limited, ſo manifeſtly limited only by the imperfect knowledge and power of thoſe who ought to diſcharge them, that little diſcuſſion or illuſtration of them can be required. Though I truſt it is not neceſſary, yet as I ſhould be ſorry, even for a moment, to be miſunderſtood on ſo delicate a point, I think it right to premiſe, that, in reaſoning about what is *good* or *bad*, *beſt* or *worſt*, in reſpect of medical aſſiſtance, I mean only what is *more* or *leſs good*, *moſt* or *leaſt good*. I muſt not be underſtood to ſuppoſe, or inſinuate, that any medical aſſiſtance is *poſitively bad*, as being *worſe* than *none*; ſo that it would have been better for the patients

patients not to have had it, but to have remained without the help of ſuch phyſic, or phyſicians, or ſurgeons.

Such a notion is too illiberal, too unjuſt, and too groſsly abſurd, even for a farce.

I am not to conſider the duty of a Phyſician to abſtain from giving his patient what he knows will hurt or kill him; which would be little leſs than an attempt to commit wilful murder; nor am I to conſider the duty of the Managers of an hoſpital not to employ ſuch murderous phyſicians in it, or ſurgeons ſo unſkilful, that it would be better for a poor man to remain unaſſiſted with a ſpreading ulcer or a dangerous wound undreſſed, or a broken leg unſet, than to come under their care. In the very notion of medical or chirurgical *aſſiſtance*, I conceive there is implied the expectation and chance of ſome good. Accuſtomed, as we are in this country, to a great deal of that kind of aſſiſtance, whenever we need it, we ſhould think the total want of it a moſt grievous evil; we ſhould conſider *that* very ſmall ſhare of it which we could get in ſome other countries, nay, in ſome parts of our own, as ſomething very bad.

The goodneſs or badneſs therefore which I am to conſider, are only different degrees of goodneſs; but the difference may be very great; and that is bad which is leſs good than what we know may be obtained, either in point of medicines, or of medical and chirurgical attendants.

If, in one night, all the ſurgeons of Edinburgh were removed to a better world, where it is to be hoped they will all arrive in due time, their ſenior apprentices (of four or five years ſtanding) might juſtly be eſteemed the beſt chirurgical aſſiſtance in this city. If they were removed in the ſame way the next night, the junior apprentices, of one, two, or three years ſtanding, would be the beſt aſſiſtance of that kind; and it would be the indiſpenſable duty of the Managers of the Hoſpital to get the aſſiſtance of ſuch apprentices, whether older or younger, for the ſick poor in the Surgeons department,

partment, till ſuch time as *better* aſſiſtance, I mean the attendance of more ſkilful and experienced Surgeons, could be obtained for them. The mere want of medical aſſiſtance is in many caſes ſo bad, as to imply, almoſt certainly, very pernicious, if not fatal conſequences. In ſuch caſes, to with-hold it voluntarily, would be almoſt as criminal, as to ſuffer a wretch to periſh, by with-holding food from him. To procure it in ſome meaſure, but leſs good than might be procured, is an approach to that evil to the ſick, or a degree of it; implying ſome degree of the ſame criminality in thoſe who do ſo.

For example, if the Managers were, without ſuch a neceſſity as I have ſtated, to commit the ſick poor in the Surgeons Wards to the care of the youngeſt apprentices of the Surgeons in Edinburgh, inſtead of their maſters, (which I preſume they might by law be prevented from doing); the abſurdity, and even the atrocity, of ſuch a proceeding would be glaring.

Yet circumſtances may eaſily be conceived, in which any of us would be happy to get the aſſiſtance of ſuch apprentices, for ourſelves or for our beſt friends. If any of us in a remote country, or diſtant part of our own, far from better help, had fallen among thieves, or been thrown from our horſes, and been left at the way-ſide ſorely wounded, with broken limbs, and likely to bleed to death; the arrival and profeſſional help of even a very young ſurgeon's apprentice would be to us as great a bleſſing as that of the good Samaritan was to the wretched Jew. But none of us would be ſo mad as to prefer ſuch help to that of the boy's maſter, if we had our choice.

In the greateſt, moſt ancient, and moſt civiliſed empire on the face of the earth, an empire that was great, populous, and highly civiliſed, 2000 years ago, when this country was as ſavage as New Zealand is at preſent, no ſuch good medical aid can be obtained among the people of it, as a ſmart boy of ſixteen, who had

been but twelve months apprentice to a good and well employed Edinburgh Surgeon might reaſonably be expected to afford.

If the Emperor of China, the abſolute monarch of 333 millions of people, more than twice as many as all Europe contains, were attacked with a pleuriſy, or got his leg broken, it would be happy for him to get ſuch a boy for his firſt phyſician, and Serjeant-ſurgeon. The boy (if he had ſeen his maſter's practice in but one or two ſimilar caſes) would certainly know how to ſet his Imperial Majeſty's leg, and would probably cure him of his pleuriſy; which none of his own ſubjects could do. According to the information which I have received from the late Dr Gillan, a Phyſician of this country, who was at Pekin and all through China with the Britiſh embaſſy, in that vaſt empire, they neither know the uſe of blood-letting, nor the way to ſet a broken bone.

What I thus have ſtated explicitly, with reſpect to the apprentices of ſurgeons, is applicable ſtill more ſtrongly to all the maſter-ſurgeons, Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons in this City: none of whom, after ſo full an explanation on my part, can miſunderſtand me, when I have occaſion to conſider the goodneſs or badneſs of their aſſiſtance to the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, as depending on the mode of their attendance in it.

The duty and obligation of a Phyſician, "faithfully to do all "things conducive to the health of the bodies of his patients," is ſo explicit, complete, and indefeaſible, that it can neither be enforced, nor reſtrained, nor ſet aſide, by any contract whatever.

For example, if a Phyſician really believes that Dr James's powder is the beſt medicine, and fully adequate, for the cure of continued fevers, Godbold's vegetable balſam, the beſt for curing conſumptions,

conſumptions, and Leake's juſtly famous pill, the beſt for curing the pox; it is unqueſtionably his duty to preſcribe thoſe medicines, and no others, in the ſeveral diſeaſes reſpectively for which he thinks them beſt.

If he were a Profeſſor or Public Teacher of Medicine, it would be equally his indiſpenſable duty to recommend them very ſtrongly to his pupils, and to adviſe them to employ thoſe medicines univerſally in preference to all others, in thoſe ſeveral diſeaſes.

If the proprietors (patentees) of thoſe medicines, hearing of the Doctor's favourable opinion of them, and eager to make the moſt of it, ſhould enter into a contract with him, giving him a good round ſum, ſuppoſe L. 1000 for each drug, on condition that he ſhould on all occaſions in his practice preſcribe them, and in his diſcourſe and lectures recommend them, as the beſt for thoſe diſeaſes reſpectively; it is plain that his conduct ought to be juſt the ſame after, as it had been before, ſuch a contract was made. If he ſhould even tire of his contract, diſliking any kind of reſtraint on his converſation and practice; ſtill he could not honeſtly with reſpect to his patients and his pupils, independently of any regard to his contract, act or ſpeak otherwiſe with reſpect to thoſe medicines.—I can well conceive that the Cenſors of the Royal College of Phyſicians might take notice of him and his contract, and that he might be unanimouſly expelled the College for his illiberal conduct, which would undoubtedly be thought a very ſhameful and dangerous example.

But even if this were done to him, I can ſee no ground, in law or equity, on which he could claim to have his contract reduced: for he could not even pretend that there was any thing in it contrary to law, or goſpel, or natural juſtice, or his own profeſſional duty, or the rights or the intereſt of his patients, or of his pupils; provided always that he ſtill continued to believe *bona fide* that thoſe drugs were the beſt remedies for the diſeaſes in which he re-

commended them. In this caſe, if he did not recommend them, he would be guilty of a breach of truſt to his patients and his pupils, as well as of a breach of contract with the patentees. Theſe laſt, I conceive, would have a good action againſt him for his conduct.

But the caſe ſurely would be widely different with him, from the moment that he became convinced that thoſe drugs were not *good* remedies, or even that they were not *the beſt* remedies, for the diſeaſes in which by his contract he was bound to recommend them. From that moment it becomes his indiſpenſable duty *not* to recommend *them*, and to recommend thoſe other medicines which he has found or believes to be better than them.

If, in compliance with his contract, and againſt his better knowledge, and his conſcience, he ſhould truſt the cure of a patient labouring under the faſhionable diſtemper to Leake's juſtly famous pill, avowedly knowing of a better cure for that diſeaſe, and if the patient ſhould loſe his noſe by virtue of ſuch a contract, he would certainly have a good action againſt his Doctor for the value of his noſe.

If, for the ſame reaſon, and equally knowing that he was not doing what was beſt for his patient, he ſhould truſt the cure of a man in a fever to James's powder, neglecting the other and better means of cure which had become known to him, and that patient ſhould die; I ſuſpect the Doctor would be guilty of culpable homicide.

To ſuppoſe that his contract could be enforced by law, is to ſuppoſe that he could be compelled by law to do that which he would be puniſhed by law for doing. I preſume there can be no doubt that his contract would be declared iniquitous, and that he would be compelled by law to refund the money he had taken on a condition which he could not fulfil without committing a crime.

The

The application of this to the caſe of the Managers of the Infirmary and their contract with the College of Surgeons, reſpecting their mode of attending in it by rotation indiſcriminately, is plain and obvious; and the concluſion with reſpect to the abſurdity, the nullity and the *criminality* of ſuch a contract, muſt, I think, be irreſiſtible.

The College of Surgeons are the Patentees of Surgery in this City. By their charter, they have the excluſive right of vending that valuable and really indiſpenſable commodity to the inhabitants of Edinburgh.

The Infirmary evidently had, and ever muſt have, occaſion for a large ſhare of it. The Surgeons might furniſh it to the Infirmary in different ways, and on different terms, more or leſs favourable to the Hoſpital, either with reſpect to its pecuniary intereſt, or with reſpect to the benefit of the ſick poor admitted into it.

For example, they might either have offered their ſervices in the Hoſpital without fee or reward, as the College of Phyſicians did for more than twenty years; or they might (moſt juſtly and reaſonably) have required an adequate pecuniary recompence for their attendance in the Hoſpital, as has been given for near fifty years to the two ordinary Phyſicians of it. They might all of them have offered to ſerve in the Hoſpital by rotation for one or two months at a time: or all, or any number of them that choſe, might have offered to ſerve permanently, either gratuitouſly or for a proper ſalary, leaving the choice of the individuals ſelected from their number to the Managers of the Infirmary.

In ſuch circumſtances, it would clearly have been a duty of the Managers, as Truſtees of the funds of the Hoſpital, to have made a prudent and economical bargain with them; as favourable to the pecuniary intereſt of the Infirmary as they could make it conſiſtently with the more important intereſt of the ſick.

But

But it would have been an infinitely ſuperior and indefeaſible duty of the Managers to provide for the poor patients in the Surgeons Wards the beſt Chirurgical aſſiſtance which they could get for them; whether this was by the permanent appointment of a few ordinary Surgeons to the Hoſpital, or by permitting all the Surgeons in Edinburgh to attend in the Infirmary by rotation.

Suppoſing now, what is not ſtrictly true, but much more favourable to both parties (Managers and Surgeons) than what really is true, that they believed *bona fide* that the attendance of all the Surgeons by rotation was beſt for the patients under their care; juſt as my Doctor is ſtated to have believed that three famous Patent Medicines were beſt for the cure of three very common diſeaſes; it would have been the duty of the Managers, if they could, to get all the Surgeons in Edinburgh to attend in that manner: whether they had made any contract with them, or got L. 500 from them, or got them to give up their rival hoſpital or not.

But this duty could continue only till they became convinced that ſuch a mode of attendance was not the *beſt*, or that it was (comparatively) *very bad* for the patients. From that hour it would become their ſupreme and indefeaſible duty to procure for the patients, if they could procure it, the attendance of the Surgeons in the moſt advantageous manner: juſt as it would be the duty of a Phyſician to uſe the medicines which he found the *beſt*, and not to uſe thoſe which he found were *not* the *beſt*, in the exerciſe of his profeſſion; though at one time he had firmly believed the latter to be the beſt.

That a Phyſician could not lawfully make, or honeſtly fulfil, ſuch a contract as would reſtrain him from doing what was right, or beſt for his patients, and that he could never be compelled by law to adhere to ſuch a contract, is ſurely ſelf-evident. It muſt be equally ſo with reſpect to the Managers and their duty and their contract with the Surgeons, unleſs ſome eſſential difference

ence between their duty and that of Phyſicians, of which difference at preſent I can form no notion, ſhall be pointed out.

But with all due reſpect to our predeceſſors in this truſt, and to the individual members of the Corporation of Surgeons, who, more than ſixty years ago, made that contract, all of whom have long ſince been in another, and I hope a better world, after ſufficiently repenting of the wrong which they did in this, I muſt take the liberty to ſay, that I do not believe the contract in queſtion was ſtrictly a *bona fide* tranſaction on either ſide.

I mean that both parties knew perfectly that they were doing ſomething which was *not beſt* for the ſick poor; which was phyſically and morally wrong with reſpect to them, though advantageous in point of pecuniary intereſt to the Hoſpital, and *perhaps* advantageous, in the ſame reſpect, and at any rate gratifying, to the Incorporation of Surgeons as a body, and to the majority of them as individuals.

The whole tenor of the tranſaction eſtabliſhes this opinion of it beyond all diſpute.

As to the Surgeons, we have no reaſon to believe that any one of them was ſo ſtupid, or ſo ignorant of his own profeſſion, as not to know, that a few ſurgeons conſtantly attending in a great hoſpital would become more ſkilful, more expert and dexterous operators, and, in every reſpect, better practitioners, than ten times their number would be who attended by rotation for a month or two at a time, once in two, or three, or four years. But their avowed motive, "*to preſerve ane equality among the Surgeons of Edinburgh*," precludes all controverſy about *their* ſhare in the *demerit* of the tranſaction.

As to the Managers, their original conduct in appointing permanently a few Surgeons to the Hoſpital, the ſentiments which but the year before they made that contract with the Surgeons, they had expreſſed relatively to the attendance of all the Phyſi-

cians

cians by rotation; above all, the conſiderations by which they were prevailed on to make that contract with the Surgeons; not any clear and ſatisfactory arguments to convince them that what they had originally thought *bad* would really be *good* for the patients, but 500 Sterling pounds paid them down, and the Surgeons giving up their own hoſpital, which was a rival, and was likely to intercept many charitable contributions that otherwiſe might have come to this Infirmary:—All theſe things too plainly teſtify that the Managers knew well that what they were doing was *wrong* with reſpect to the patients.

That ſum of money received from the Surgeons, and the conduct of theſe in giving up their own rival hoſpital, ſo as to allow more money to come to this, I humbly conceive, were ſomewhat of the nature of a BRIBE; whether *logicè* a BRIBE, or only a GRATIFICATION, I am not caſuiſt enough to determine; nor is it a queſtion of any importance.

A BRIBE is good broad Engliſh, for "a reward given to pervert the judgment *.'

In the caſe in queſtion, the judgment of the Managers, as ſhewn indiſputably by their ſubſequent conduct, was *perverted* by the *reward given* to them by the Surgeons. There was money given by *one* party, and received by *another*, in a tranſaction, for doing what both of them knew to be wrong to a *third party*.

There can be no doubt that a corporation may be *bribed*, that is, may have its judgment and conduct perverted by a reward given to it, in its corporate capacity, as certainly and effectually, as the individuals who compoſe it can be perſonally.

If a rich man, in order to obtain for himſelf a ſeat in Parliament, ſhould give to the corporation of a borough leſs rotten than ſome are ſaid to be, L. 10,000, not to go into the pockets of the individual members of it, but deſtined ſolely for the pious and charitable purpoſes

* See Johnſon's Dictionary, word BRIBE.

purpoſes of building a church and endowing an hoſpital, on the *expreſs condition* ſtipulated even in a *formal contract*, that the corporation ſhould elect him their repreſentative, under a heavy penalty in caſe of failure; and if the corporation ſhould elect him accordingly, and if his election were conteſted, and the contract between him and his borough, or even complete evidence that ſuch a bargain had been made between them, came into the hands of his adverſary's counſel before a committee of the Houſe of Commons, ſurely any lawyer muſt be a very ſtupid fellow, not worth the value of one curl of his own wig, if he could not find *bribe* enough in the tranſaction to vitiate the Honourable Gentleman's election, perhaps even to disfranchiſe the borough.

If the L. 500 given by the Surgeons to the Managers, as a corporation, and truſtees of the funds of the Infirmary, had been divided into ſmaller ſums by the donors, and by them diſtributed among the Managers individually for their own private uſe and profit, it would have been complete and arrant bribery of the common kind; ſuch bribery, I conceive, as never could have been avowed, and ſuch as, if it had ever come to light, would have vitiated the tranſaction, made the contract null, and ſubjected to puniſhment, at leaſt to cenſure and diſmiſſal from the office of Manager, all who had taken the money, or been bribed.

They were all equally *bribed*, but in their corporate capacity, when they took the ſame ſum of money on the ſame *baſe* condition; though they took it for the profit of the Hoſpital; unleſs it can be eſtabliſhed, that it was a fair and open *ſale* of the privilege of attending in the Hoſpital; implying, that the Managers had the power and the right to *ſell* that privilege, without regard to what was good for the patients.

If they had a right to *ſell* it, or diſpoſe of it *for ever*, without any reſtraint from the conſideration of what was good or bad for the patients, *a fortiori* they muſt have had a right to

let it for three, or ſeven, or nineteen years, or any term that might be agreed on.

They muſt have had a right to advertiſe it in the newſpapers to be *ſold* or *let* to the higheſt bidder; juſt as the Magiſtrates of Edinburgh, truſtees for the common good of the city, advertiſe to ſell or let, for a certain term, the dung of the ſtreets.

They muſt have had a right (if they were in law and fact entitled to diſregard the good of the patients, and to do what was *not beſt* for them) to declare in their advertiſement that their chief object was to get money for the Hoſpital, and that they ſhould not require the attendance in it to be conducted in the manner moſt favourable to the patients, but ſhould allow it to be done in the way moſt agreeable to the purchaſers or leſſees; and to have uſed this as an argument to get a greater price for the commodity which they brought to market, or a higher rent for that part of their eſtate which they wiſhed to let.

I do not believe that our predeceſſors in this truſt ever thought, any more than we do, that they had, or could have, ſuch abominable rights; nor conſequently can I think them altogether *blameleſs* in that tranſaction with the Surgeons.

It is eſſential to our cauſe in general, as well as to my argument in particular, that theſe things be ſtated *fairly*, and of courſe *ſtrongly*, and that they be kept ſteadily in view; but I have no mind to forfeit my own credit in point of probity and underſtanding, by unjuſtly and unneceſſarily imputing guilt to a ſet of men of the higheſt worth and public ſpirit, to whom, even for their exertions in the management of this Hoſpital, their country owes infinite obligations.

Though their bargain with the Surgeons was eſſentially wrong, and never can be juſtified or made right, they had a ſtrong excuſe for what they did. Their motive was pure and honourable. I do not think it is going too far to ſay, that their honeſt zeal for the

eſtabliſhment

eſtabliſhment of this Hoſpital, that is, for the good of the ſick poor in general, betrayed them into that error. Like the raſh oath of *Uncle Toby*, in behalf of the dying *Le Fevre*, it was a ſin of which no man could be aſhamed, and of which few would have virtue enough to be guilty. We may truſt that it ſhared the fate of his oath; that " the informing Angel bluſhed as he gave it in; " and the recording Angel let fall a tear upon the ſpot, and waſh- " ed it out for ever."

They ſaw no other means of accompliſhing the eſtabliſhment of this Hoſpital, but by conſenting to that condition which the Surgeons required. Their *error* and their *wrong*, the conſequences of which have been ſo ſeverely felt for ſixty years, conſiſted in this, that in order to do good to the ſick poor in general, they did evil to thoſe ſick poor who came under the care of the Surgeons, in this Infirmary.

Even in this reſpect they had another ſtrong excuſe or alleviation. Though they knew that it was an evil, as appears by their previous conduct in the ſelection and permanent appointment of a few Surgeons, and by their conduct at that very time, and afterwards, with reſpect to the Phyſicians, they did not know how great an evil they were doing. They could not foreſee that the number of the Surgeons in Edinburgh would increaſe as it has done, nor could they ever ſuppoſe that four fifths of the ſenior Surgeons ſhould withdraw from the Hoſpital-duty, and leave the care of the patients in it to their junior brethren in rotation.

But whatever excuſe we may find for our predeceſſors in this truſt, whatever praiſe we may give to their pure and honourable motives, we muſt remember that the evil done to the ſick poor, who needed the care of Surgeons in this Infirmary, has been for ſixty years, and is at preſent, and unleſs that contract be annulled, will continue as long as the Hoſpital laſts, juſt as great as if the

ſame bargain had been made for the moſt diſhonourable motives.

Sure I am, that if the preſent contract with the Surgeons were once reduced, or given up, as I truſt it ſoon will be; and if the Managers, knowing what they now do, were for 10,000 guineas to make ſuch another contract with them, or with the Phyſicians; thoſe 10,000 pieces of gold would be as arrant a BRIBE as the thirty pieces of ſilver given to *Judas Iſcariot* for betraying his Maſter. And if any of our number, knowing what we all do of the evil that muſt neceſſarily reſult from it, ſhould put their names to ſuch a contract, they would be perfectly entitled to go away, and do as *Judas* did, when his conſcience ſmote him for the evil which he had committed.

Can *we* then be guiltleſs, if we knowingly and willingly allow that cruel evil to continue, which to do would be ſo great a wrong?

Such are the *illuſtrations*, for, ſtrictly ſpeaking, they are not *proofs*, which, by making us attend to it carefully in different points of view, and conſider it in its various relations, appear to me ſufficient to *eſtabliſh*, as a *ſelf-evident truth*, the *greater* propoſition of *our* ſyllogiſm, or the *law* in our caſe: (as ſtated page 123, and 129, 130).

If I have ſucceeded in ſhewing that there is a certain *duty* on the part of the Managers of the Infirmary towards the patients in it, and in explaining the nature, extent, and importance of that *duty*; which things are not generally underſtood, but which I, a Phyſician, accuſtomed frequently, during the laſt three and twenty years of my life, to practiſe in an hoſpital, have means of knowing better than lawyers, to whom the ſubject is new and unintereſting; I conceive, that, even by force of *illuſtration*, I have made good my point. If there be ſuch a *duty* as I have ſtated, every contract requiring or implying the violation or neglect of it muſt of courſe be reduced, as not only null and void, but in ſome meaſure criminal in both the contracting parties.

We

We all have been taught, and have uniformly through life believed, that laws, from the ten commandments down to our own time, are made and executed to enforce our various duties; never to ſanction or compel the violation of any of them.

No body ſurely can believe that any perſon can either voluntarily, *ex mero motu*, or by contract for a valuable conſideration received, effectually and legally renounce or violate his *duty* as a Chriſtian, a ſubject, a ſoldier, a huſband, a father, or a ſon; for this reaſon, among others, that whatever is the *duty* of one party is the *right* of another, who conſequently muſt be injured by ſuch a tranſaction.

SECTION VII.

IF, in the courſe of judicial proceedings, or for the ſatisfaction of any individuals more ſtrict and captious than candid in their reaſonings, a complete logical proof of *our* greater propoſition ſhall be required, it may be given. For, though in general, and in all fair reaſoning, it is needleſs, and though it is often difficult, it is not always impoſſible to *demonſtrate*, or prove in the moſt perfect manner, a *ſelf-evident* truth.

In many caſes, and in ours moſt obviouſly, this may be eaſily done, by what is called in logic a *deduction to an abſurdity*; and what is well known in legal arguments of the ſtricteſt kind, by the phraſe, *putting a caſe*.

This mode of reaſoning conſiſts in the ſimple and eaſy expedient of aſſuming as a truth, and as the *greater* propoſition of a ſyllogiſm, the direct contrary of what we wiſh to prove, and from *that*, and ſome arbitrary ſuppoſition, or imaginary caſe ſtated, as the *leſs* propoſition of the ſyllogiſm, deducing a fair concluſion, which muſt be true, if the firſt or greater propoſition be true; but yet is ſo groſsly, or perhaps ridiculouſly falſe or abſurd, that no perſon can believe

believe it, or meet with any credit, either in ſcience, or in a Court of Juſtice, if he ſhould pretend to believe it. This is held to be complete proof that the aſſumed principle is falſe, and that the direct contrary of it is true; for it is eſtabliſhed in logic, and admitted in law, (becauſe it cannot be denied), that every propoſition *muſt be* either *true* or *falſe;* and conſequently, that every propoſition directly *contradictory* to one that is *falſe*, *muſt be true.*

Some of the *illuſtrations* which I have given in proof of *our greater* propoſition, approach very near to ſuch deductions to abſurdities from the contradictory propoſition. But I ſhall now give ſome more ſtrict deductions from it to abſurdities more groſs and palpable, and withal of ſuch a kind that they may well ſerve another and a very important purpoſe; namely, to ſhew that the *badneſs* of a particular *mode* of attendance of the ſurgeons in an hoſpital may be perfectly known, and proved by competent teſtimony, if this ſhall be required, without any occaſion for the indelicate, illiberal, and cruel procedure of ſcrutinizing the real and comparative merits and demerits of any individuals of their number.

Aſſuming then as the principle to be *diſproved* by a deduction to an abſurdity, in order to *prove* the one directly contradictory to it, " That a formal contract between the Managers of the Infirmary " and the Surgeons, with reſpect to their mode of attendance in it, " though *bad* for the patients, cannot be reduced;" I ſhall firſt ſtate the caſe, that the Surgeons, profeſſing great care and anxiety for the ſafety and good management of the patients, had made a contract with the Managers of this tenour; that no member of their College ſhould be allowed to attend in the Hoſpital but ſuch as had attained the age of ſixty-three, and had actually worn ſpectacles for thirteen years. Very plauſible oſtenſible reaſons might have been aſſigned for ſuch a limitation; the vaſt advantage of prudence, and cool judgment, and long experience, and the great danger to be apprehended from the want of theſe eſſential qualifications.

cations. And if the majority of the College of Surgeons, at the time of making the contract, had been men of ſixty years of age or more, they might have had a very ſubſtantial, though not juſt an oſtenſible reaſon for chooſing to make ſuch a bargain, and even giving a good round ſum in conſideration of having their right and mode of attendance limited in that manner.

Yet common ſenſe, without the aid of experience, and without any neceſſity to enquire into particulars reſpecting the practice, the operations, the manual dexterity, the degree of eye-ſight, or the ſucceſs of individuals, of thoſe veteran ſurgeons, could pronounce with certainty, that ſuch a ſyſtem was *not the beſt;* that, on the contrary, it was *very bad* for the patients; that thoſe venerable Grey Beards, though probably many or all of them might be excellent conſulting ſurgeons, were very unfit, by reaſon of their dim eyes and trembling hands, to be ordinary attending and operating ſurgeons in a great hoſpital.

Next I ſhall ſtate the caſe, oppoſite in its nature, but equal in abſurdity to the former, and, I preſume, almoſt or altogether as bad for the patients, that the Surgeons, in their contract with the Managers, for Sterling money paid them down, had ſtipulated that only the youngeſt five or ſix of their number ſhould attend and operate in the Infirmary; aſſigning as their reaſons for chooſing ſuch a limitation, their great anxiety to preſerve " ane equality " among the Surgeons of Edinburgh," their wiſh to make even the youngeſt members of their corporation expert operators, and ſkilful in every part of their profeſſion, as ſoon as poſſible, for the benefit of the good people of Edinburgh, who are not admitted into the Hoſpital; but ſaying nothing of any fears entertained by them of a few of their number, if permanently appointed to attend in the Hoſpital, acquiring very ſuperior improvement, and high credit and reputation, and a great ſhare of the moſt profitable practice.

Surely

Surely common ſenſe, without the aid of experience, or any minute ſcrutiny or teſtimony as to particular misfortunes, or ſeeming want of ſkill and dexterity in ſome of thoſe very young practitioners, could determine at once, that the ſyſtem (whether good or bad for the College of Surgeons, or for the public at large) was *very bad* for the patients, was unjuſt to them, was inhuman and abſurd.

Next, I ſhall ſtate a caſe ſtill ſtronger, and one that, if there were degrees of abſurdity, would be more abſurd than either of the former; and yet, on the aſſumed principle of the indefeaſible validity of a formal contract between the Managers and the Surgeons, made without regard to the good of the patients, muſt ſtand good to all eternity.

I ſhall ſuppoſe that it was ſtipulated in the contract, in conſideration of the money paid down, and other valuable conſiderations, that the four or the ten *worſt* (in the ſenſe already fully explained) of the College of Surgeons ſhould always be the attending and operating Surgeons in the Infirmary. The deficiencies or demerits which were to conſtitute their qualifications for ſo important an office might be aſcertained by ballot in their own College, in ſuch a manner as to them might appear faireſt and beſt.

I know the common way of ſpeaking on ſuch a point as this: that every member of ſuch a College is legally, and ſufficiently, and equally qualified to practiſe, and has an equal right to practiſe, &c. Nothing can be more plain, or more ſatisfactory, or more familiar to us all.

It is exactly the caſe with all Phyſicians, Fellows or Licentiates of the Royal College of Phyſicians, and with all Lawyers at the Bar. All of theſe are counſel learned in the law: but it is a prevailing opinion that ſome of them are more learned than others. And many people take the liberty to fancy that there may be a correſponding difference among phyſicians and ſurgeons.

Phyſicians

Phyſicians, I well know, think ſo of one another; and I hope I may without offence ſuppoſe that lawyers and ſurgeons do ſo too. If a lawyer had an important and nice cauſe of his own in court, I preſume he would make ſome ſelection among his profeſſional brethren, to whom he entruſted the conduct and the arguing of it. And if all the Surgeons of Edinburgh had occaſion—not *to cut*, which is a trifle,—but *to be cut* for the ſtone, which is a very ſerious matter, I have no doubt but they would all like to make ſome kind of choice or ſelection of their operator. They all know well the nicety and danger of the operation in many reſpects: for example, that, in thruſting in a curious kind of knife like a pointed ſcoop with a very ſharp cutting edge, if the operator miſſes the proper direction by half a quarter of an inch, inſtead of making an opening into the bladder, through which the ſtone may be extracted, he will perforate the neareſt bowel, thereby inflicting a mortal wound. They all know that this misfortune has often happened in unſkilful hands: and to make the danger of that accident, and of ſeveral others to be feared in the performing of the operation, as little, and the probability of complete ſucceſs in it as great as poſſible, they all would chooſe, each for himſelf, as his operator, that one of their profeſſional brethren whom each individually thought the moſt ſkilful and beſt.—It is poſſible that *all* the votes of the moſt *competent*, and in the caſe ſtated the moſt candid judges, might not be united in favour of *one* or even *two* of their own number. But it is certain that the votes would not be equally divided among them all. Four or perhaps ten of them might have a great number of votes, in proportion to the number of voters: Theſe four or ten we ſhall call the *beſt*, in the eſtimation of their own profeſſional brethren. Fifteen, or twenty, or five and twenty perhaps, might have each a few votes: theſe we ſhall call the *middling*. Four or perhaps ten of the whole number might probably have very few or no votes: theſe we ſhall call the *leaſt good*, or in one word, the *worſt*.

Now, on the principle aſſumed in order to be refuted, a formal contract made with the Surgeons, that the *worſt* of their number ſhould be Surgeons to the Infirmary, in conſideration of money given and received, muſt ſtand good for ever.

This undeniable inference from the principle in queſtion appears to me not only abſurd, but atrocious: juſt as much as it would be to eſtabliſh a contract between the Managers of the Infirmary and the Bakers and Butchers of this City, in which the Managers (for value received) engaged to accept for the uſe of the Hoſpital, bread and meat of ſuch inferior quality, ſo bad in compariſon of what they might have got from ſome of their number, as to imply ſome unneceſſary danger to the health or lives of the patients who were to eat it.

But if all theſe inferences with reſpect to the validity of the three contracts ſtated, be abſurd; and if ſuch contracts be not merely abſurd or fooliſh, but criminal and atrocious, what words ſhall we find to do juſtice to the abſurdity and demerit of a real formal contract, that happily unites, and makes *worſe*, what was *worſt* in all the three, which when ſtated ſeparately appear too abſurd and atrocious to deſerve a moment's conſideration?

Yet this is the *fact* with reſpect to the contract actually ſubſiſting between the Managers and the Surgeons. To this I alluded, ſeriouſly, in page 18, 19. of this Memorial, when I ſaid, that human genius, if it had been ſo abſurdly employed on purpoſe, could not have contrived a worſe.

By it, the oldeſt and the youngeſt Surgeons in Edinburgh, the beſt, the middling, and the worſt, are equally entitled to attend by rotation in the Infirmary. None of them are obliged to attend: and many who, from their high profeſſional character, and great employment in private practice, muſt be ſuppoſed as good as any, if not the very beſt, in Edinburgh, do not attend.

But even if all of theſe were compelled to attend in rotation in the Hoſpital,

Hoſpital, it would not mend the matter much. It is evident that on ſuch a ſuppoſition the beſt Surgeons in Edinburgh would *ſometimes* practiſe in the Infirmary. So much the better for the patients who chanced to be in it during the time of their attendance. But what better would the other patients be for that?

The Royal Infirmary, as a corporation, is immortal; and may be ſaid to be benefited by the attendance of the beſt Surgeons, in rotation, with the middling, and the worſt.

But the individual patients admitted into it are all mortal: ſo mortal indeed, that none of them have more than one life; and very few of them have any limbs to ſpare. Now, if any of them ſhould chance to loſe that one life, or one of thoſe limbs which he could ill ſpare, by the unſkilfulneſs of the attending Surgeon, which probably might not have happened in the hands of one more ſkilful, it would be no compenſation, and, I ſhould think, very little comfort, to him and his family, to be aſſured, that, two or three years before, a very ſkilful Surgeon had been attending in the Infirmary for two months; and that another Surgeon, no leſs ſkilful, would attend in it for as long a time, in a twelvemonth or ſomething leſs; ſo that if the poor man had had the good luck to get his ſkull fractured, or his arm diſlocated, two or three years ſooner, or had poſtponed the breaking of his leg for but one year, all would have been very well with him.

But even the appointment of the oldeſt, the youngeſt, or the worſt Surgeons to attend in the Infirmary, abſurd and cruel as it muſt be thought, would not be ſo bad as the preſent ſyſtem of rotation. Any of them permanently appointed, however young, would in a few years grow older, and acquire much additional knowledge, and practical ſkill, and manual dexterity; any of them, however bad at firſt, (ſetting aſide all ſuppoſition of great and irremediable defects, which are here out of the queſtion), would in a few years grow better; perhaps even very good: And even the

oldeſt of them, who could not improve by further practice, might yet do good ſervice in the Hoſpital, by the application of their long experience, and cool judgment, and great profeſſional ſkill; and though they could not in general be ſuppoſed good operators, or capable of again becoming ſuch, they might inſtruct and train to that and to every part of the Hoſpital-duty, a certain number of younger Surgeons, whom they might and certainly would be allowed to have as aſſiſtants. This is done in the great London Hoſpitals, and ought to be done every where.

But the deplorable ſyſtem of rotation prevents even theſe chances of advantage from the *worſt poſſible* choice of attending Surgeons, and aggravates all the evils neceſſarily reſulting from a bad ſelection of them, or no ſelection at all; and in return gives no benefit, or chance of benefit, to the Hoſpital, but the *tranſient* and *caſual* attendance of a *few* of the beſt Surgeons, promiſcuouſly with moſt or all of the reſt.

If it were neceſſary, which I truſt now it is not, to ſhow any more of the *abſurdities* neceſſarily reſulting from the propoſition, that a formal contract between the Managers and the Surgeons, for money paid the former by the latter, is indefeaſable, I ſhould ſtate the caſe of ſuch a contract made on the expreſs condition, that all the Surgeons of Edinburgh ſhould attend in the Infirmary by rotation, for *one day*, or *two days*, or *one week*, or *two weeks* at a time. I need go no farther in ſtating imaginary periods of attendance; for within my own memory, the regular time of a Surgeon's attendance by rotation was only *one month*. The evil of that was ſeverely felt: and an *abſurd* remedy was applied, changing the time of attendance from *one* to *two* months.

This was *ipſo facto* doing two things, both of them very much for my purpoſe in this argument: *Firſt*, Acknowledging the great evil of the ſyſtem of rotation. *Secondly*, Avowedly applying an inadequate remedy to that great evil. If it was very bad for the patients,

tients, in many reſpects, to change the Surgeon in attendance every month, it muſt alſo be very bad (though in ſome reſpects not quite ſo bad, or rather not ſo bad for *ſo many* of them) to change him once in two months; for it is juſt as bad for ſuch of them as are in the Hoſpital when the change takes place.

But with reſpect to the more important object, (I mean ultimately and more generally important to the Hoſpital, and the ſick poor, and the public at large, for nothing can be more important than health, and life, and limbs to the individuals who ſuffer), the ſuppoſed improvement of every Surgeon by his attendance in the Infirmary; the change made of the time of attendance from one to two months was completely *abſurd*. There ſeems even to have been an egregious overſight in point of arithmetic in it.

Neither party ſeems to have attended to the obvious and undeniable mathematical truth, That juſt in proportion as they lengthen the time of each individual's attendance by rotation, they muſt lengthen the interval which is to elapſe before he can again attend in his turn.

The number of the ordinary Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons is between forty and fifty.

Suppoſing only five and twenty of them to take their turn of Hoſpital-duty; if the time of attendance be one month, the interval before the ſame perſon can attend again muſt be juſt two years.

If the time be two months, (as it is at preſent), the interval muſt be four years.

Lengthen the time of attendance to ſix months, and the interval muſt be twelve years.

Make the time of attendance one year, and the interval muſt be twenty-four years; ſo as to allow each individual about an equal chance of attending twice in his life; and ſcarce any chance of attending a third time; and no chance at all of it till he has paſſed the age of ſeventy.

But

But if the time of attendance by rotation were made *two years*, which I preſume is the ſhorteſt time of ſuch duty that can enable a young man even of good talents and education to make any conſiderable improvement in profeſſional ſkill, and manual dexterity as an operator, he could not attend again in his turn for *eight and forty years;* when he muſt be ſomewhere between ſeventy and eighty years of age, and moſt probably will neither have the inclination to attempt, nor the power to diſcharge ſuch an arduous taſk a ſecond time.

If the times of attendance be made very ſhort, a few days, or weeks, or even months, a ſurgeon can ſcarce improve by what he ſees or what he does. If they be made ſo long as to allow him to make ſome conſiderable improvement, he and his improvement muſt be for ever loſt to the Hoſpital. There cannot in this caſe be even a *rotation* of attending Surgeons, beſt, middling, and worſt; but there muſt be a *perpetual ſucceſſion* of the *youngeſt* and *moſt inexperienced* Surgeons, who, ſuppoſing their talents and education as good as thoſe of their elder brethren, muſt be the *leaſt fit*, or the *worſt* for the important and difficult duty of an hoſpital.

Serioufly, and without exaggeration, it may with truth be ſaid, that the ſyſtem of the Surgeons attending by rotation is ſo *execrably and abſurdly bad*, that it cannot even be *mended*.

If any perſon think it worth his while to eſtimate the improvement, which, on the moſt favourable ſuppoſition, four and twenty Surgeons would acquire by attending in the Infirmary by rotation for four and twenty years, perhaps as long a period as we can reaſonably expect men to go on improving, whether the times of their attendance, and conſequently the intervals of their non-attendance, be longer or ſhorter; and as a kind of ſtandard wherewith to compare their improvement, to take that of a Surgeon permanently attending; it may eaſily be done thus.

The

The whole time of each individual's attendance and conſequent improvement in the Hoſpital, would be, at the end of twenty-four years, twelve months: juſt the ſame as a ſurgeon attending permanently would have at the end of his firſt year's attendance.

But as even that ſum of improvement is acquired gradually and equally, by the twenty-four attending by rotation, in twenty-four years, we muſt take, as the average for them all, the half of that ſum, as denoting what, one with another, they had got at the middle period of that precious time of improvement; that is, at the end of twelve years: before which period they all had leſs, and after it, in the ſame proportion, they all had more improvement. The average improvement then of the twenty-four, during their twenty-four years of improvement, would be juſt equal to the improvement of one attending permanently at the end of ſix months.

Yet all this will be true only on the ſuppoſition, certainly not true, but here admitted becauſe it is moſt *favourable* to the twenty-four attending in rotation, and moſt *unfavourable* to my argument; I mean, that the probability of a Surgeon's improvement by attendance in an hoſpital is directly as the whole time of his attendance, without regard to its being by ſhort periods at once with long intervals, or altogether continued for a time equal to the ſum of thoſe periods, without any interruption at all. But I believe the direct contrary of this ſuppoſition is the truth: that very little improvement is made in a ſhort period of attendance, and a great part of that little is loſt in the long interval of non-attendance.

Such, independently of all thoughts of duty to the patients, and all conſiderations of the wrong done to them, is the wretched equality of ſkill which the ſyſtem of attending by rotation tends to preſerve among the Surgeons of Edinburgh.

Though it be not uſual in this mode of ſtrict reaſoning by a deduction to an abſurdity, nor conſequently eſſential to the validity of ſuch reaſoning in this, or in any caſe, yet, in this inſtance, I have

have no objection to go one ſtep further; and inſtead of tiring myſelf and others with any more examples of *abſurdities* fairly deduced from the principle aſſumed in order to be diſproved by them, to propoſe to thoſe who contend for the indefeaſible validity of a contract between the Managers of the Hoſpital and the Surgeons with reſpect to their mode of attendance in it, even though bad for the patients; to ſtate any caſe or ſuppoſeable contract between thoſe parties, *notoriouſly bad* for the patients, which would *not* be abſurd in itſelf, unjuſt and cruel to the patients, and conſequently ſuch as ought to be reduced, and ſuch as it would be in ſome meaſure criminal to fulfil, and impoſſible by law to enforce.

I ſhould by no means require of them to ſtate the caſe of a contract nearly as bad as the real one; for it is impoſſible to contrive or ſuppoſe one nearly ſo bad; nor ſhould I by any means require that it be like the real one, *intuitively* and *demonſtrably* bad, from the nature of things; nor even that, by both parties, at the time of making it, it was in ſome meaſure known to be bad for the patients, ſo as to imply ſome degree of *mala fides* and guilt in thoſe who made it.—I ſhall be content if they will only ſtate the caſe of a ſuppoſed contract at firſt believed to be really good for the patients, but which, after ample experience, not of ſixty or even thirty years, but of ſix or of three years, was found experimentally *very bad* for the patients, and can be proved to be ſo by the moſt deciſive teſtimony.

If neither my abſurd inferences from the aſſumed principle can be refuted or ſhewn not to follow from it, nor any caſe, or ſuppoſed contract *very bad* for the patients, can be ſtated, which it would not be abſurd at leaſt, if not criminal to enforce; ſurely that principle of the indefeaſible validity of ſuch a contract, though made for value received, muſt be falſe. Then the direct contrary of it, "That every ſuch contract *bad* for the patients muſt be reduced," is neceſſarily true. This is the *greater* propoſition of our ſyllogiſm,

(page

(page 123.), and this full proof of it concludes our argument; the *leſs* propoſition (if this ſhall be required) is to be proved by the moſt ample teſtimony. *Our* concluſion, for the reduction of the contract, follows of courſe.

SECTION VIII.

THOUGH our ſtrict, and, as I truſt, concluſive argument, is thus finiſhed; yet, for the ſatisfaction of thoſe who may find it difficult at firſt to attend fully to the *intereſt* and *rights* of the patients in the Hoſpital, whom I regard as a *third party*, moſt cruelly wronged by our contract, I ſhall ſtate the parallel caſe of ſuch a contract made between two reſpectable Corporations, where there is either no third party, or none who has any intereſt or rights which can be violated by the moſt rigorous execution, or the legal enforcement of the contract.

I ſhall take a very ſuppoſable contract, between the corporation of Butchers and that of the Tanners in Edinburgh. I ſhall ſuppoſe, that, " in order to preſerve an equality among the tanners of " Edinburgh," (an object, by the by, of *fully* as much importance to the public, as preſerving ane equality amongſt the Surgeons), and for other weighty reaſons them thereto ſpecially moving, the tanners paid the butchers L. 500 down; in return for which the butchers ſtipulated, and bound themſelves under a heavy penalty, beſides performance of the condition, that all the tanners in Edinburgh, or all of them who choſe, by rotation, for two months at a time, ſhould have the hides of all the bullocks admitted into the ſhambles, and ſlaughtered there, at a certain price, either fixed in money, or varying in a ſettled proportion according to the price of grain.

Next, I ſhall ſuppoſe, that after a trial of thirty or of ſixty years, it was found, either that the butchers had the better of the tanners, or the tanners of the butchers, in this bargain: for example, that the butchers found that they could get more money for the hides of their beaſts from three or four of the tanners, or by bringing them to open market.

In this caſe, I can conceive no ground in law or equity on which the butchers could claim to have their contract with the tanners reduced.

It was a fair mercantile tranſaction, a bargain for a valuable commodity; which bargain, whether more or leſs advantageous for one or other of the parties who made it, no way trenched upon the intereſt or the rights of any third party.

If an ox, at the moment when he is admitted into the ſhambles, were minutely informed of the contract in queſtion, or were allowed to peruſe it at his leiſure; and if he could ſpeak; he might as well ſave himſelf the trouble. Neither he, nor the ableſt counſel that he could employ, though theſe of courſe would have an infinite deal to ſay on the ſubject, could ſay any thing to the purpoſe, or ſhow that any *right*, or even any *intereſt* of his, was violated by that mode of diſpoſing of his hide.

When the ox is fairly admitted into the ſhambles, and ſlaughtered there, and cut into pieces, and roaſted or boiled, and eaten by the good people of Edinburgh, it is of no conſequence to him who has the tanning of his hide. I ſhould even gueſs that it is of little moment to him whether that operation be more or leſs ſkilfully performed.

But this, I humbly conceive, is not exactly the caſe with a poor man, admitted into the Royal Infirmary, with a ſore leg or a fractured ſkull.

The poor man certainly has an *intereſt*, and, I think, has a *right*, to have his hide treated as tenderly and as ſkilfully *as poſſible*.

Whatever

Whatever *unneceſſarily*, however deliberately and formally, trenches on that *intereſt* or that *right*, is a *wrong* to the poor man; ſuch a wrong as in many caſes will be *irreparable*; in ſome will be *fatal.*

Let no uncandid or careleſs reaſoner perverſely ſuppoſe, that I compare our contract with the Surgeons to the imaginary bargain between the butchers and tanners, in order to ſhow any ſimilarity between them, or to contend, that what would be law and juſtice in the latter caſe muſt equally be ſo in the former.

I compare them, purely in order to ſhow the *contraſt* between them, their *total* diſſimilarity, their *infinite* difference, and the conſequent abſurdity and atrocity of ſuppoſing the ſame principles of law or equity to be applied to both.

I do not offer ſuch an outrage to human nature, as to think a poor man admitted into the Hoſpital on the ſame footing as an ox taken into the ſhambles. Wo be to him, whether Manager, or Phyſician, or Surgeon, or Lawyer, who cannot or will not perceive the difference.

Nor do I mean to give any offence to the Managers, by comparing them to Butchers, or to offer any indignity to the Surgeons, by comparing them to Tanners. I wiſh to make them all attend to what they ſurely all muſt know, but what they ſeem on ſome occaſions to have overlooked, the ſuperior nature and dignity of their truſt and their profeſſion; and the peculiar circumſtance which conſtitutes its merit, its importance, and its true dignity.

The butcher and the tanner owe no duty, profeſs no charity or benevolence to the ox, of whoſe carcaſe and ſkin they are entitled to make the utmoſt profit which they fairly can.

But to the ſick poor, the Managers, the Phyſicians, and the Surgeons of an hoſpital, profeſs the greateſt charity and benevolence. The Hoſpital is opened to receive them, and Phyſicians and Surgeons miniſter to them, for their good. Hence ariſes a moſt ſacred

duty, from which whenever the Managers or the medical attendants deviate without neceſſity, on any pretence whatever, they incur a degree of guilt by their breach of truſt, and degrade themſelves in public eſtimation, far below the rank of butchers and tanners, who are uſeful, and, while they faithfully do the duties of their ſeveral ſtations, are reſpectable members of ſociety.

Such is the ſtrong argument in equity, on which I have no doubt that we might ſafely reſt our cauſe, if our charter had contained no ſuch clauſe as that one relating to the ſick poor in the Infirmary being taken care of " by ſome of the moſt ſkilful Chi- " rurgeons ;" or if it had contained no ſuch clauſe as that one limiting our powers as managers to " ſuch things conſiſtent with " the laws of the realm, as may *beſt* conduce to the charitable end " and purpoſe above mentioned."

But it happens, moſt fortunately, that our plea in equity, and our right in ſtrict law, far from being in any degree inconſiſtent, coincide moſt perfectly. Each of them, taken by itſelf, is ſo ſtrong, that on it ſingly I believe we might confidently have relied: the two taken together, I ſhould think ſo nearly irreſiſtible, as to take away all probability, though certainly not the poſſibility, of any troubleſome litigation.

I know that ſome individuals have adopted a moſt heretical creed with reſpect to the deciſions of courts of juſtice. They have perſuaded themſelves that every poſſible ſuit at law is but a kind of throw of the dice, affording nearly an equal chance to each party; and which conſequently each party has an equal right and an equal *intereſt* to try. I have even heard mention made of a rubber game, in difficult and puzzling caſes, in which oppoſite deciſions had been given.

Whence

Whence ſo damnable a hereſy can have proceeded I know not: and I do not care either to hazard any conjectures about the cauſe of it, or to ſet about confuting ſuch heretics.

If thoſe we have to deal with are tainted with this hereſy, we muſt expect them to act accordingly; and we ſhall have ſo much the more trouble with them.

If they think they *can* perſuade a court of juſtice,

1. That our charter is mere waſte paper;

2. That the clauſe in it relating to the ſick poor in the Infirmary being taken care of "by *ſome of the moſt ſkilful Chirurgeons*," might be cancelled or ſet aſide whenever the Managers pleaſed;

3. That *ſome* means *all;*

4. That the *moſt ſkilful* means both the *moſt* and the *leaſt ſkilful*, and in particular means the *youngeſt* and moſt *inexperienced* Surgeons;

5. That the clauſe in our charter expreſsly limiting our powers to things that *may beſt conduce* to the charitable end and purpoſe of the inſtitution, does *bona fide* give us the power of doing things, and eſpecially of making a perpetual contract with the Surgeons, directly and notoriouſly inconſiſtent with that charitable end and purpoſe;

6. That the Managers are only truſtees for the funds of the Infirmary, but by no means guardians of the health and lives of the ſick poor admitted into it, nor conſequently obliged, either in law, or equity, or conſcience, to do what is *good* or what is *beſt* for them;

7. That a Surgeon acquires no improvement by practiſing in a great Hoſpital even for many years;

8. That the ſick poor may be as well taken care of by all the Surgeons, and chiefly by the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced of them, attending promiſcuouſly in rotation or ſucceſſion, as they could

could be by a few of the moſt ſkilful and experienced attending permanently in the Hoſpital for many years;

9. That the ſick poor in the Infirmary have no intereſt and no right to obtain ſuch good care;

10. That, in the eye of the law, a poor man, when ſick, and received into the Infirmary, with reſpect to health, and life, and limb, is no more than an ox when admitted into the ſhambles, or the hide of an ox when thrown into a tan-pit;

If thoſe we have to deal with are ſeriouſly convinced of all theſe things, they muſt of courſe expect to win their cauſe, if they chooſe to try it; and I have no right and no power to hinder them to do ſo. I can only ſuggeſt to them, that it may be well worth their while to conſider maturely, whether it be conſiſtent with their duty, their honour, and their real intereſt, by trying or even by winning ſuch a lawſuit, to outrage the general ſentiments of mankind, in the cauſe of juſtice, humanity, and common ſenſe.

SECTION IX.

SOME of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary who know and approve the general tenor and purpoſe of this Memorial, have expreſſed to me their earneſt wiſh that I ſhould ſtate particularly what I conceive would be the proper mode of the appointment and attendance of the Surgeons in the Hoſpital. This I have no ſcruple to do, in compliance with their requeſt; though I am ſenſible that to many perſons it will ſeem premature in the preſent ſtage of the buſineſs. I do it the more chearfully, conſidering that it may do good, and can do no harm. Any thing that I can propoſe on ſuch a ſubject is to be regarded only as a mere ſuggeſtion or hint, on which others are to decide, after obtaining every poſſible information and aſſiſtance to direct their judgment. Imperfect or erroneous

neous as my hints may be thought, they may yet be uſeful, by calling the attention of others to an important ſubject, who will perceive, and endeavour to ſupply and correct, the deficiencies and the errors of my plan.

On the principles fully explained, and, I truſt, eſtabliſhed, in the preceding pages, we may with eaſe and confidence, and with ſcarce a poſſibility of diſpute, ſtate the following particulars as what are *moſt needful*, if not *all that can be uſeful*, in point of ſurgery, in a great Hoſpital.

1. That there be a number of ordinary attending Surgeons (permanently appointed) amply ſufficient to do all the duty.

2. That theſe Surgeons be as highly qualified as poſſible.

3. That there be a regular ſupply of younger Surgeons, carefully trained, by ſome years cloſe attendance in the Hoſpital, and every poſſible inſtruction, to act as aſſiſtants to the ordinary Surgeons, and to fill their places in caſe of their death or retreat; ſo that the care of the patients may never be committed to very young and inexperienced practitioners, who attend and operate for their own ſake, knowing that they "*would be the better of more* "*experience.*"

4. That there be a ſufficient number of *extraordinary* or *conſulting* Surgeons, men of much experience and high character in their profeſſion, and well accuſtomed to hoſpital-duty, ready at all times, when called on, to give their advice and aſſiſtance in all extraordinary and difficult caſes.

If any thing further in point of chirurgical aſſiſtance be really wanted in an hoſpital, it ought to be fairly ſtated and explained by thoſe who know of it, and who honeſtly wiſh to promote the charitable purpoſe of the inſtitution. As ſoon as it is made known, it will of courſe be procured if poſſible.

In the mean time it will ſcarce be diſputed, that ſuch an eſtabliſhment would be a great public benefit, and much better than what has ever yet ſubſiſted in this Infirmary.

Now,

Now, all thoſe things, I am confident, may be obtained: none of them perhaps without ſome difficulties; but I can ſee no difficulties in any of them which may not be ſurmounted with a little perſeverance.

In the firſt place, I muſt not attempt to conceal, that the permanent appointment of a few ordinary Surgeons neceſſarily implies ſome additional annual expence to the Hoſpital. Such Surgeons muſt be paid for their attendance, and for their great and perſevering labours in the Hoſpital-duty; which duty many a young Surgeon would gladly diſcharge without fee or reward for a few months in his life, either as a good piece of education and inſtruction to himſelf, or as a feather in his cap.

I need not enlarge on this point of the expence of ſuch an eſtabliſhment as I ſuggeſt: we ſhall hear enough of that from our Treaſurer, whoſe objections will probably have more weight with ſome of the Managers than they will ever have with me.

On this important and intereſting occaſion, I think ſuch conſiderations of economy muſt be diſregarded; they are but ſecondary objects. I know the funds of the Infirmary are very ſlender; I know its expences for years together have ſo much exceeded its income, that it has been neceſſary more than once to ſolicit extraordinary contributions from the charity of the public. But I know alſo, that the public charity hitherto has always kept pace with the benevolent, though ſeemingly imprudent exertions of the Managers to make this Hoſpital as uſeful as poſſible.

The Infirmary, indeed, is poor; but this city and this country are not poor, nor are they growing poor; on the contrary, I believe the wealth of Edinburgh, and of Scotland in general, is greater at preſent than ever it was, and that it is increaſing rapidly. I do not believe the charity of the people is diminiſhing; for their ſake I hope it is increaſing too, as it will cover a multitude of their ſins.

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To that wealth and that charity, I am convinced, we may fairly and ſafely truſt on this occaſion, as ſoon as the nature and greatneſs of the evil to be removed, and of the good to be obtained, are fully underſtood by the public. This, as formerly hinted, was one of my chief reaſons for ſtating our caſe ſo ſtrongly, and illuſtrating it ſo particularly.

Poor as the Infirmary is, it is not quite ſo poor at preſent as it was fifty years ago; when the Managers, even in their utmoſt need, gave ſmall ſalaries to the two ordinary Phyſicians, whom they appointed permanently to do the Hoſpital-duty, in order to get rid of the ſad evil of the promiſcuous, though gratuitous, attendance of the whole College of Phyſicians by rotation. The Infirmary has not proſpered the leſs for that deviation from ſtrict economy, which has ever ſince been univerſally approved of. Every argument which led to that eſtabliſhment of the Phyſicians, and ſeveral more, as already explained, are applicable in their full force to the preſent caſe of the Surgeons.

It is as reaſonable and juſt that the ordinary attending Surgeons ſhould be paid for their permanent ſervices, as that the Phyſicians ſhould be paid for theirs, or the Druggiſts for the medicines which they furniſh to the Hoſpital. The Infirmary cannot afford to pay its Surgeons *liberally*, or at all in proportion to what they would be paid for the ſame profeſſional duty in private. And I have ſuch confidence in the generoſity and good ſenſe of the Surgeons themſelves, that I am convinced none of them will expect any great ſalary for their attendance in the Infirmary. But whatever the Hoſpital can afford, I think it would be better for it to give for the beſt chirurgical aſſiſtance, than to accept gratuitous aſſiſtance leſs good; juſt as it would be better to give the full market-price for the beſt food and medicines, than to give the patients bad food and medicines, though got at a lower price, or for nothing.

Let us ſuppoſe the worſt that can happen, and much worſe than I believe will happen, that this new expence ſhall not in any degree be compenſated by the charity of the public when the object and reaſon of it become known; no greater evil can reſult from it, than that fewer patients annually muſt be received into the Hoſpital; but probably not leſs, perhaps much more good will be done to the ſick poor, than at preſent. Now this good to be done to the ſick poor, not the number of them to be annually admitted into the Infirmary, is the proper object of this inſtitution. Every body who knows any thing about hoſpitals will acknowledge, that (the expenditure of money being ſuppoſed the ſame in both caſes) it would be much better to admit only 150 patients at once, all of whom may be comfortably accommodated and properly taken care of, than to receive into the Hoſpital all that deſired to be admitted, as uſed to be done in the *Hotel Dieu* at Paris, and lay them four or five or ſix in a bed, with the probability of their being ſwept off by hundreds, either by the bad air or the contagious fevers engendered among them. This is indeed a ſhocking caſe, though a real one, and may be thought too ſtrong an illuſtration: But the ſame undeniable general principle is applicable, whenever the number of the patients to be received is put in competition with the due and proper care of thoſe that are received.

As to the number of permanent ordinary Surgeons that will be requiſite to do the duty of the Hoſpital, the general principle certainly is, that it ought to be amply ſufficient, but not too great. As, on the ſyſtem long eſtabliſhed, there has been but one Surgeon in attendance at once, who is ſuppoſed able to do all the duty in his department; and as there are but two Phyſicians to a much greater number of patients in their department, it may be thought needleſs to have more than one ordinary attending Surgeon; but this, in my opinion, would be a very ſcurvy piece of economy, and a moſt injudicious eſtabliſhment.

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If there were but ten or a dozen patients in the Surgeons department, there ought to be two ordinary attending Surgeons, not only to provide againſt the poſſible and very probable accidents of abſence, ſickneſs, or death of one Surgeon, but alſo that the two attending Surgeons may have daily opportunities of aſſiſting one another, and conſulting together without delay, or difficulty, or idle formality, about every caſe which to either of them appeared difficult, or dangerous, or doubtful. Such quiet rational conſultations, either among Surgeons or Phyſicians reſpectively, or among both together, I am ſure would be much more for the benefit of patients, either in hoſpitals or out of them, than thoſe numerous, formal, pompous, and unavailing conſultations, which have ſo often and ſo juſtly been made the ſubject of reproach and ridicule.

If there were ten times as many patients as I have ſuppoſed in the Surgeons wards, I have no doubt that two Surgeons would be amply ſufficient to take proper care of them, and would do ſo at leaſt as well as a greater number would do, perhaps better; juſt as hath been repeatedly obſerved with reſpect both to Surgeons and Phyſicians in many other hoſpitals; and as hath been experienced in this Hoſpital for fifty years, with reſpect to two ordinary Phyſicians, and the great number of patients under their care.

Perhaps it will be thought right, in order that the error, if any, may be on the ſafe ſide, to have three ordinary Surgeons permanently attending in the Infirmary. But I am ſure if this point is to be determined by the conſideration of what is beſt for the patients, the number of permanent ordinary Surgeons will not be leſs than two, nor more than three. Any greater number would almoſt inevitably lead to ſome kind of attendance by rotation among them; implying, to a certain degree, ſome of the evils already ſhown to reſult neceſſarily from ſuch a ſyſtem.

As to the ſecond point, the proper ſelection of two or three Surgeons, the moſt highly qualified, to do permanently the Hoſpital-duty; this is certainly of as much conſequence as the appointment of a proper number of them. I have already acknowledged that I am no judge of the real and comparative merits of individual ſurgeons, and declared that I will take no concern in the choice of them for the Hoſpital. On this very account I may with the more freedom ſtate thoſe indiſputable general principles, on which I earneſtly wiſh and truſt that the choice ſhall be made.

I take it for granted, as what no perſon of competent knowledge and judgment will ever ſeriouſly diſpute,

1. That in the College of Surgeons in Edinburgh many more well qualified individuals may be found than can really be wanted for the ſervice of the Hoſpital.

2. That it is *probable* that thoſe are beſt qualified for ſuch a truſt, who, after a complete and regular education in their profeſſion, have had the advantage of many years experience, both in private practice and in this Infirmary, and who actually have at this time great employment, and public eſteem and confidence.

Of courſe, I earneſtly wiſh that two or three ſuch men were appointed ordinary Surgeons to the Hoſpital. Perhaps they will not thank me for this ſuggeſtion, which may ſeem to reduce them to the unpleaſant dilemma of either declining to do what is right, and what is expected of them, or elſe doing what is very diſagreeable and inconvenient to themſelves. I certainly have no wiſh to give offence to any of them, and I am ſenſible that I touch a very delicate point.

It is not, however, ſo embarraſſing as at firſt ſight it may appear. Any ſuch Surgeons who give their ſervices in the Hoſpital on a new ſyſtem, will have, and, what is better, will deſerve, great credit with the public for doing ſo; more eſpecially as it muſt be plain to every body that they can have no motive but honeſt zeal for the public

public good, when they undertake ſuch a laborious duty. Any ſalary that the Infirmary may be ſuppoſed to give to its Surgeons could be no object to ſuch men; it could not even be an adequate compenſation for the time which they muſt employ in the Hoſpital.

But, on the other hand, I conceive that many ſuch Surgeons may, not only without any diſcredit to themſelves, but with great propriety, and moſt honourably, decline that ſervice. Some are ſo much engaged in private practice, and are ſo often called to the country, that they cannot be expected to undertake ſuch a taſk; becauſe it is impoſſible that they can give either ſufficient time or ſufficient attention to their Hoſpital-duty. Then I truſt I may without impropriety ſuggeſt, that men come to a certain age, (which it would be needleſsly indelicate to ſtate very particularly), though as fit as ever they were for the ordinary practice of their profeſſion as ſurgeons, are well entitled to decline the daily labours, and very frequent performance of nice and difficult operations, which muſt be required of Hoſpital Surgeons. I have ſeen ſome Surgeons operate very well, whoſe eye-ſight was ſo much impaired, that they were obliged to uſe ſpectacles; and I have known many men, ſurgeons and others, whoſe hands were very ſteady at the age of ſeventy and upwards. Yet it cannot be diſputed, that, in the decline of life, the ſight generally fails, and the hand ſhakes, to ſuch a degree, as to make men leſs fit to be operating ſurgeons in a great hoſpital, than they would have been twenty or thirty years before. Any ſurgeon who feels in himſelf the beginning of theſe ſymptoms of decay, may, with the greateſt honour to himſelf, decline the appointment to the Hoſpital, or withdraw from it if he had previouſly been appointed. Then it can be no ſecret, that in Edinburgh a great part of the buſineſs of thoſe called Surgeons, is phyſic rather than ſurgery. I mean, that it is ſuch as might be done by Phyſicians here, and would be done by Phyſicians in other countries, in which the diſtinction of the different branches of the medical

profeſſion

profeſſion is ſtrictly obſerved, and enforced by law; and conſequently ſurgeons are as much prevented from the practice of phyſic, as phyſicians (here as well as elſewhere) are from the practice of ſurgery and pharmacy. I have no doubt that in Edinburgh three fourths at leaſt, more probably nine tenths, of the proper medical practice is done by the members of the College of Surgeons; who in fact, though not in name, are the ordinary phyſicians in every family. Many of them, I am well convinced, would have very extenſive practice, and of courſe great affluence, though they ſhould never perform any great or nice chirurgical operation. This I know was for many years the kind of practice of one of the moſt eminent ſurgeons in London, who has now renounced entirely the practice of ſurgery, and is become the greateſt phyſician in that great city. I have no doubt that this ſyſtem will continue in Edinburgh as long as the Medical School in this Univerſity ſhall continue to flouriſh: for this plain reaſon, that every young man who is bred as a Surgeon in this city may eaſily have, if he chooſes, and in fact moſt of them chooſe to have, the education of a Phyſician alſo. It depends partly on a man's own taſte and future proſpects at the time of his education, partly on the circumſtances in which he is afterwards placed, whether he ſhall make phyſic or ſurgery the chief object of his attention and ſtudy, or whether he ſhall chooſe to be in his own perſon both ſurgeon and phyſician. Now, for this moſt common, and therefore moſt important kind of practice, a man may be well qualified who would not chooſe, and really would not be fit, to appear as a principal operator in a great hoſpital.

Yet after making all reaſonable or poſſible allowances for theſe conſiderations, I ſtill muſt think and wiſh that two or three of the moſt eminent and moſt experienced Surgeons may be found, who will accept the appointment of ordinary Surgeons to the Infirmary, were it but for *two or three years*, nay but for *one year*; juſt to give

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the moſt creditable beginning to a new and rational ſyſtem, to introduce and eſtabliſh ſome of thoſe improvements in the conduct of the chirurgical department of the Hoſpital, which I am no judge of, but which I am well aſſured are much wanted, and to preclude all ſuſpicion of any ſiniſter purpoſe in ſuch a change of ſyſtem as I recommend, and as hath long been wiſhed for by all who are moſt intereſted, and purely intereſted, in the proſperity of the Hoſpital, and the welfare of the ſick poor who are admitted into it.

But in this caſe, as in all caſes, let us ſuppoſe the worſt poſſible, that we may be the better prepared for it, and, as far as we can, provide againſt it. Let us ſuppoſe, that not one of thoſe Surgeons who at preſent have the moſt extenſive practice, which implies the greateſt ſhare of public eſteem and confidence, will undertake the arduous taſk of Hoſpital-duty even for one or two years; then of courſe the choice of ordinary attending Surgeons muſt be made from among thoſe members of their college who have not yet attained ſuch eminence. If this be thought an evil, (I mean in compariſon of the other preferable ſelection), let it at leaſt be obſerved, that it would be a very *ſmall evil*, or, in other words, a *very great good*, when compared with the great evil which actually has ſubſiſted in this Infirmary for more than ſixty years, in conſequence of the ſyſtem of rotation. Then the evil ſuppoſed, whether greater or leſs, would be but temporary, and moſt probably even from the firſt might be but very ſmall. For the reaſons already ſtated very fully, a few of the profeſſion, who, by their merit, have attained great eminence, will probably continue to engroſs the greateſt part of the buſineſs as long as they continue in health and vigour, even though many of their younger brethren of equal or ſuperior talents, and perhaps equal merit in every reſpect, are gradually coming on. This is ſo generally known and underſtood, that it can require no illuſtration.

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In the courſe of nature, thoſe Members of the College of Surgeons who are at preſent the youngeſt muſt become the oldeſt on the liſt; and ſome of thoſe who are at preſent unknown to the public will then be moſt highly eſteemed and moſt generally employed, and after a few years will give place to ſome of their younger brethren, yet unborn. Theſe things, though future, are juſt as certain, as that none of the Surgeons at this day the moſt eminent, were eminent or even known to the public fifty years ago, or were born in the end of the laſt century.

It is equally certain, though not ſo generally known or attended to, that, in the natural courſe of ſcience, I mean, if no unexpected and calamitous revolution ſhall happen, every ſucceeding generation will ſurpaſs the preceding in real knowledge and in every uſeful art. This will be the caſe with the ſcience of phyſic as well as with mathematics and chemiſtry, and with the operative part of Surgery, as well as with the arts of building ſhips, or ſpinning and weaving cotton. Mankind, or at leaſt ſome of the moſt ingenious and wiſeſt of them, whoſe example muſt ſoon be followed by the reſt in their ſeveral profeſſions and ſtations, when not prevented by ſome powerful cauſe, will always learn and retain what is good and uſeful, and will diſcover, and correct, and ſupply, what is erroneous or defective, in the ſciences and the arts which they have occaſion to ſtudy and to practiſe.

It is ſelf-evident, that whoever be the firſt appointed ordinary Surgeons to the Infirmary, the ſelection in a few years *muſt* be made from among thoſe who are at preſent the junior Surgeons, or elſe from among others ſtill younger than theſe.

If this (by reaſon of ſuch a neceſſity as I have ſuppoſed) were done from the firſt, the difference, in point of benefit to the Hoſpital, between ſuch a ſelection, and one made from among the moſt eminent and beſt employed Surgeons, would probably be much leſs than at firſt might be ſuppoſed; and even this difference would

would ſoon be at an end, and from the beginning it would in a great meaſure be compenſated by thoſe junior Surgeons giving more of their time and attention to their Hoſpital-duty than their ſenior brethren would have occaſion, or indeed would be able to do.

But the beſt illuſtration and moſt concluſive argument on this point, is the ample experience which the Hoſpital has had within theſe fifty years in the permanent appointment of its Phyſicians. Some of theſe, for example, Dr Hope, Dr Stedman, and Dr Rutherford, were men of conſiderable ſtanding and eminence in their profeſſion, when they ſeverally were appointed Phyſicians to the Infirmary. But Dr Clerk and Dr Drummond, the two originally appointed, and more lately Dr Hamilton, (who, it ſhould be obſerved, was firſt appointed as *aſſiſtant* to Dr Stedman, and actually ſerved *ſome years* in that capacity), were very young phyſicians when they obtained the permanent appointment. Yet no complaints were ever made of theſe gentlemen; nor do I believe that even one perſon was ever ſo irrational as to ſuppoſe that the Hoſpital-duty could be nearly ſo well done by the whole College of Phyſicians attending in rotation, as it was from the firſt by thoſe three individuals attending permanently.

I ſhould expect with confidence juſt the ſame kind of benefit from the permanent appointment of two or three even of the junior Surgeons. Though I am not at all acquainted with ſome, nor intimately acquainted with any of them, yet I know enough of ſeveral of their number, to be convinced, by their converſation and conduct, that they are men of ſenſe and obſervation, and competent medical knowledge. I muſt preſume the ſame, or much more, of their ſkill and dexterity in ſurgery, which they have chiefly ſtudied: but this I chooſe to take for granted, having no wiſh, or much leſs than none, either to ſee it or feel it. The

Managers, however, may eaſily obtain on that point ample information from the moſt competent judges.

As to the third point, the nomination of aſſiſtant Surgeons; I ſhould think it much for the benefit of the Hoſpital, and indeed of all concerned, that each ordinary Surgeon ſhould be allowed an aſſiſtant, for reaſons and purpoſes fully ſtated already. Such aſſiſtants may be appointed to them either from the firſt, as in the medical department was done near ten years ago, when Dr Freer (now Profeſſor of Phyſic in the Univerſity of Glaſgow) was appointed aſſiſtant to Dr Rutherford; or after ſome time, and at the requeſt of each principal Surgeon; as was done more than four and twenty years ago in the medical department, when Dr Hamilton was appointed aſſiſtant to Dr Stedman.

If the principal ordinary Surgeons firſt appointed be men pretty far advanced in life, and much engaged in private practice, they ought to be allowed aſſiſtants from the firſt. If they be younger men, and leſs engaged in practice, the immediate appointment of aſſiſtants to them, though for many reaſons deſirable, will not be ſo neceſſary, and may be poſtponed for ſome years.

This it is proper to attend to; for the chief or only difficulty that I foreſee on this point is, that at firſt proper aſſiſtant Surgeons may not eaſily be found. Even the junior members of their College, who have once attended, or expected to attend, as principal Surgeons, may not chooſe to appear in the Hoſpital in the character of aſſiſtants or ſubalterns. Perhaps they will be very angry at me for thinking it even *poſſible* that any of them ſhould attend on that footing. I ſhall be ſorry for it, but not in the leaſt diſconcerted by it; for the caſe will not by any means be hopeleſs. In the firſt place, they will have abundance of time to cool. Aſſiſtant Surgeons may not be much wanted for ſeven years or more; and in half as many minutes they will probably ſee that the appointment of

of aſſiſtant Surgeons would be better for themſelves in point of improvement, and infinitely better for the ſick poor, than the preſent ſyſtem of promiſcuous attendance by rotation. If conſiderations of perſonal vanity, or profeſſional etiquette, for which I have no great eſteem at any time, and no patience when it is oppoſed to profeſſional duty and common ſenſe, ſhall ſtill prevent any or all of the preſent members of the College of Surgeons from ſerving as aſſiſtant Surgeons in the Infirmary, we need not deſpair of ſoon finding abundance of Surgeons both able and willing to do that duty. On the ſame undeniable principle, that ſome of the preſent junior members are perfectly able to fill the places of their ſeniors, thoſe who ſhall come after them will be equally able to fill theirs. In a few years there will be many new members of that College; perhaps ſix times as many as the Infirmary can have occaſion for; and probably few of them will chooſe to decline an appointment, really honourable in itſelf, and ſo far advantageous, that it gives them the beſt poſſible chance of becoming in due time principal Surgeons to this Hoſpital and to this city.—On this account I conceive that they ought not to receive any ſalary, or in any way be an expence to the Infirmary; ſo I preſume our Treaſurer can have no objections to them.

For the ſame reaſon, I am ſure he can have no objections to the appointment of extraordinary or conſulting Surgeons, on the principle which I ſhall ſuggeſt. Whether theſe ſhall be more or leſs numerous, I do not propoſe that they ſhall receive any ſalary from the Hoſpital. Their office can never be laborious, but ſometimes may be very uſeful, though I conceive that their aſſiſtance will ſeldom be required. I think the appointment ſhould be conſidered, by themſelves and by the public, rather as an honourable teſtimony of eſteem for their character, and confidence in their profeſſional ſkill, and gratitude for their former good ſervices, than as a duty requiring frequent attendance and much labour.

If there be two ordinary Surgeons, ſtill more, if there be three ſuch appointed to the Infirmary, theſe will of courſe form the beſt, the readieſt, and the moſt uſeful of all conſultations, at leaſt in ordinary caſes; juſt as has been experienced by the two Phyſicians of this Hoſpital ſucceſſively for near fifty years, and by the Phyſicians and Surgeons of many other hoſpitals for a much longer time. But in extraordinary caſes, of peculiar doubt and difficulty, it would certainly be very much for the benefit of all concerned, for the credit of the Hoſpital and the Managers, the ſatisfaction of the public, the honour of the Surgeons themſelves, and, above all, for the good of the patients, that there ſhould be the additional aid of ſome other Surgeons of the greateſt ſkill and longeſt experience. It is only on ſuch occaſions, which ſeldom occur, probably not once in a hundred caſes, that any extraordinary conſultation ſhould be called.

The number of extraordinary or conſulting Surgeons appointed to the Infirmary may without impropriety be greater or leſs, three or four, or twice as many, provided always it be underſtood and declared, that it is not neceſſary to aſſemble them all on any occaſion; and that one or two of them will at all times be deemed a ſufficient conſultation. I am ſure it is as much as any of us would chooſe for himſelf, or as the greateſt and richeſt perſons would have, if they had occaſion for chirurgical aſſiſtance. I have no ſcruple to ſay, that I think the choice of the individual Surgeons to be called in to a conſultation, in any particular caſe, ſhould be left to the ordinary Surgeons; and that the duty of the Managers in that reſpect is fulfilled when they appoint as conſulting Surgeons, a ſufficient number of men of eminence and experience in their profeſſion, to whom that choice of the ordinary Surgeons ſhall be limited.

A certain degree of mutual eſteem and confidence, ſome reſpect for one another's profeſſional knowledge and judgment, and ſome agreement

agreement in the general principles on which they are to act, are at leaſt as neceſſary among the individuals of a conſultation, as their having all been bred to the ſame profeſſion. But thoſe accompliſhments are not always to be found, and ſometimes the very reverſe of them is to be found in a ſupereminent degree, among Phyſicians and Surgeons.

We are certainly a moſt amiable brotherhood; as every perſon muſt acknowledge who has had the good luck to ſee but a dozen and a half or two dozen of us together, eſpecially if he ſaw us at dinner. Yet, whatever the majority of us may be, I am afraid we are not all perfect angels. Some of us at leaſt appear to be made of the ſame fleſh and blood, and to be ſubject to the ſame frailties, and paſſions, and vices, as other men. The conſequence is, that when two or three of us are ſet down together in a little town, or fifty or an hundred of us in a great town, and obliged to ſcramble for fame, and fortune, and daily bread, we are apt to get into rivalſhips, and diſputes, and altercations, which ſometimes end in open quarrels and implacable animoſities, to the very great annoyance of thoſe who are, and the no leſs entertainment of thoſe who are not, our patients. A conſultation among any number of ſuch angry phyſicians or ſurgeons, in all probability, will conduce as little to the benefit of their patient, as a congreſs of an equal number of game-cocks turned looſe in a cock-pit; for probably the good of the patient will be the laſt and leaſt object of their thoughts. This is ſo well known by many diſgraceful examples, and has ſo often been made the ſubject of merriment and ridicule in novels and comedies, that I believe many very ſenſible people are ſeriouſly convinced that a conſultation is but a farce; for I have an hundred times known ſuch people decline having a conſultation of us, when I propoſed it, and urged it as ſtrongly as I could. Thoſe who think our conſultations mere farces muſt of courſe think it of little or no conſequence how they are performed; or may even think

that

that the more abſurd and ridiculous they are made, the better thoſe farces will be.

If I thought ſo, I ſhould never remonſtrate againſt the preſent ſyſtem of conſultation among the Surgeons of this Infirmary; that is, of all the Surgeons of Edinburgh, to the number of twenty, thirty, or more, who may chooſe to attend and take a ſhare in it: for I have not imagination enough to conceive any thing of the kind more ſyſtematically abſurd, or leſs for the good of the patients, or more inconſiſtent with the purpoſe, and almoſt with the very notion of a conſultation.

That promiſcuous and multitudinous congregation of all the members of the College of Surgeons, who chooſe to attend and conſult about a poor patient in the Hoſpital, is one of the many bad conſequences which reſult from the bargain made by our predeceſſors with the Surgeons; and, though trivial in compariſon of ſome of the other evils already pointed out, is in truth a very great nuiſance, which ought to be removed as ſoon and as completely as poſſible.

In ſaying this, I mean no diſreſpect to the Surgeons, either profeſſionally or perſonally. Any *one* of them may be a very good ſurgeon; any *two or three* of them (bating only the chance of perſonal animoſity and ſyſtematic irreconcileable difference of opinion) may make an excellent conſultation, ſuch as any phyſician, or any one of themſelves, or any man of ſenſe, though not of the medical profeſſion, would be perfectly content with, if his own life or limbs, or thoſe of the perſons deareſt to him, were at ſtake; and *all of them* taken together, (with only two or three months inſtruction from a clever drill ſerjeant), I am convinced would make an admirable platoon; ſuch as would do credit to the firſt regiment of Royal Edinburgh Volunteers. But how ſuch a platoon can ever ſerve the proper purpoſe of a conſultation, or any good purpoſe to the

the ſick poor, in the Hoſpital, or out of it, is to me utterly incomprehenſible.

My veneration for my own profeſſion, and for thoſe who practiſe it, is not exceſſive; and many things in the theory and the practice of it I conſider as fair objects of ridicule, contempt, and reproach. I truſt, therefore, I may have ſome chance of meeting with credit, when I declare that I do not regard proper conſultations of medical men as frivolous or uſeleſs, but quite the contrary; in numberleſs caſes they are juſt what will beſt conduce to the relief or cure of their patients. In all caſes either of *doubt*, or of *great danger*, a phyſician muſt be wonderfully ignorant, or wonderfully arrogant, moſt probably both, who does not anxiouſly deſire a conſultation, either for his patient's ſake, or for his own. I am not quite ſo ſure of the advantages of conſultations in caſes not properly of doubt, but rather of *difficulty*, whether of danger or not, in which the practice of the Phyſician or Phyſicians firſt employed proved unſucceſsful. In many of theſe caſes I am convinced it would be much better for all concerned, and eſpecially for the patient, if the Phyſicians firſt employed were allowed to withdraw, and others, (firſt ſufficiently informed of all that had been done or tried), without any reſtraint or embarraſſment, were permitted to try what they could do. This, in ſubſtance, is one of the oldeſt and moſt judicious regulations with reſpect to the medical practice in this Infirmary; ſuggeſted, I have no doubt, by ſome experienced phyſician of good ſenſe, and candour, and accurate obſervation of what he met with in his practice. I have often given that advice to patients of my own in private practice, and ſometimes have got them to follow it; but in general it is wonderfully difficult to make them underſtand that they are not the property of their phyſicians, and that, on the contrary, the ſervices of their phyſicians are their property.

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The real uſes and advantages of conſultations among medical men, and ſome of the evils and abuſes to be feared in them, are ſo well pointed out in a much eſteemed work of one to whom I owe more than a ſcholar's duty and reſpect, and his obſervations are ſo much in point on the preſent occaſion, that I think I cannot do better than quote his words.

"There are often unhappy jealouſies and animoſities among thoſe " of the profeſſion, by which their patients may ſuffer. A phy- " ſician, however, who has any ſenſe of juſtice or humanity, will " never involve his patient in the conſequences of private quar- " rels, in which he has no concern. Phyſicians in conſulta- " tion, whatever may be their private reſentments, or opinions " of one another, ſhould diveſt themſelves of all partialities, and " think of nothing but what will moſt effectually contribute to " the relief of thoſe under their care. If a Phyſician cannot lay " his hand to his heart, and ſay that his mind is perfectly open " to conviction, from whatever quarter it ſhall come, he ſhould " in honour decline the conſultation. Many advantages ariſe from " two Phyſicians conſulting together, who are men of candour, " and have mutual confidence in each other's honour. A remedy " may occur to one which did not to another; and a Phyſician " may want reſolution, or ſufficient confidence in his own opi- " nion, to preſcribe a powerful but precarious remedy, on which, " however, the life of his patient may depend; in this caſe the " concurring opinion of his brother may fix his own. But, if " there is no mutual confidence; if opinions are regarded, not ac- " cording to their intrinſic merit, but according to the perſon " from whom they proceed; or, if there is reaſon to believe, that " ſentiments delivered with openneſs are to be whiſpered abroad, " and miſrepreſented to the public, without regard to the obliga- " tions of honour and ſecrecy; and if, in conſequence of this,

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" a Phyſician is ſingly to be made reſponſible for the effects of
" his advice; in ſuch caſes, conſultations of Phyſicians tend ra-
" ther to the detriment than to the advantage of the ſick, and the
" uſual and indeed moſt favourable concluſion of them is ſome
" very harmleſs but inſignificant preſcription."

Theſe remarks of my father, in his Lectures on the Office and Duties of a Phyſician, read in this Univerſity more than thirty years ago, are evidently as applicable to Surgeons as to Phyſicians. With reſpect to both, and their patients, it is plain that all the good that can be expected from a conſultation may be obtained from one of two, or three, or four, at the utmoſt, at leaſt as well as from one ten times as numerous; and I ſhould think it almoſt as plain, that much of that good may be prevented, and much poſitive evil done, by a very numerous conſultation.

On this point, I preſume, without vanity, to know as much as moſt men. For full half my life I have been a Profeſſor of phyſic in the Univerſity of Edinburgh, during which time conſultations have been a great part of my buſineſs, to the number certainly of ſome thouſands. Nineteen times out of twenty at leaſt I have been the youngeſt Phyſician of the conſultation, and of courſe, when any written directions were to be given to the patient, have had the honour to put them in writing, to the number, I preſume, of two or three hundred at leaſt. I can ſay with confidence in point of fact, that I never yet knew any good come of a very numerous conſultation; and I doubt much whether any Phyſician or Surgeon of competent experience will give a different account of the reſult of what he has obſerved.

Once, and but once, in my life, I was at one of theſe grand conſultations of all, or almoſt all, the Surgeons in Edinburgh, and that once to my great confuſion and ſorrow; for I was accidentally the innocent cauſe of it. It happened near twenty years ago,

when I was attending as Clinical Profeſſor, that a man came under my care in a very particular ſituation. From the account which he gave of his own illneſs, and from the ſymptoms obſerved in him, it was plain that he had had, about ſix weeks before, a ſevere inflammation of his lungs, which had terminated in a great impoſthume; and that this impoſthume, inſtead of burſting into the lungs, ſo that the matter might be ſpit up, had burſt into the cavity of the breaſt, forming a diſeaſe well known in phyſic by the name of *Empyema*. This was put beyond all doubt by the previous hiſtory, and all the concurrent ſymptoms, and above all, by the characteriſtic ſymptom of diſtinct fluctuation in the breaſt, both felt and heard. Knowing no medical cure for ſuch a diſeaſe, knowing the natural tendency of it to be fatal, knowing no chance that the man had for life but a certain chirurgical operation, and thinking the danger of this would be leſs, and the probability of ſucceſs greater, if it were done ſoon, than if it were delayed till his ſtrength were further exhauſted, I thought of the operation from the firſt, but durſt not preſcribe it at once, as I ſhould have done a common tapping for a dropſy: it is very uncommon; it is reckoned dangerous to life: I had never ſeen it performed, nor indeed had I ever ſeen the diſeaſe before. After a few days trial of remedies, which, as I expected, proved ineffectual, I ſaid, at my public viſit, that I muſt have a conſultation with the Surgeon, meaning a quiet private conſultation with the attending Surgeon perſonally. By ſome miſtake in the expreſſion, whether mine or my clerk's I know not, this was underſtood to mean a full conſultation of all the Surgeons, without delay, on a moſt urgent caſe. Such a conſultation was accordingly ſummoned; but I knew nothing of it, till, calling in the evening to enquire about my clinical patients, I learned, to my great aſtoniſhment and vexation, that the operation-room was full of ſtudents waiting to ſee the extraordinary

nary operation performed, and the conſulting room as full of Surgeons who were buſy examining my patient. Thither I went immediately; more anxious to make the beſt excuſe I could for ſo abſurd a miſtake, than to take any ſhare in the conſultation. There I found my man in the middle of them; and a moſt formidable array it was. I do not remember the exact number of them; nor could it eaſily have been counted. A clever exciſeman, if he were allowed to gauge the conſulting room, could tell within half a dozen; for the room was almoſt as full as it could hold. But the number of the conſultation is of no moment; and I remember well the reſult of it, and the event of the caſe. It was decided, after long diſcuſſion, that the operation at that time was not adviſable; and it was recommended to me to try what I could do for the patient in the way of medical practice; which I had actually been doing, for ſome days, without the leaſt benefit, or proſpect of benefit to him, that I could ſee.

The laugh went ſo much againſt me on that occaſion, and the mountain in labour was ſo ſtrongly before my eyes, that I could do nothing but ſhrug my ſhoulders and hold my tongue: fully reſolved, however, not to try ſuch another conſultation, without irreſiſtible neceſſity.

My man, of courſe, died; not indeed in the Hoſpital; for, finding he grew rather worſe than better, he ſoon tired of me and my medical practice, and, in leſs than a fortnight, went away to Glaſgow, where he died in ſix weeks.

Perhaps I ſhall be told, that, if the operation had been performed as I propoſed, the man might have died in the ſixth part of that time; and that then, I who adviſed it, and the Surgeon who performed it, would have been ſaid to have killed him. Very probably both theſe evils would have happened; as they may happen in every caſe of a capital operation in ſurgery; but, when ſuch an

operation is performed, the patient probably has his beſt or only chance for life.

It muſt not be thought that I mention that caſe as a proof or example of ignorance in the Surgeons; quite the contrary: without any compliment to them, I may ſay with confidence, that every one of them, and, probably, two thirds of their apprentices, and my ſtudents, who were aſſembled in the operation-room expecting to ſee the operation performed, muſt have known the diſeaſe from its unequivocal ſymptoms; and muſt have known that the operation was the patient's beſt or only chance for life. I give it as an example, and a fair illuſtration, of the inefficacy of ſuch multitudinous and ill-aſſorted conſultations; and of what my father has ſo gently but emphatically ſaid, that they "tend rather "to the detriment than to the advantage of the ſick; and the uſual "and indeed moſt favourable concluſion of them is ſome very "harmleſs but inſignificant preſcription."

It is well known that ſome individuals, from exceſſive but very natural anxiety for themſelves, their families, or their friends, and that others, as a piece of ſtate and pomp befitting their rank and fortune, now and then congregate an unneceſſary and inconvenient number, perhaps as far as five or ſix medical men, for a conſultation, day after day. But even ſuch conſultations are uncommon; and if the patients and their friends are pleaſed, we have no reaſon to complain of them. If every great and rich man in the kingdom ſhould chooſe, as a piece of ſtate, to go out of the world with the help of five and twenty Phyſicians, and as many Surgeons, as they commonly chooſe to be dragged to their graves by ſix horſes, when two could do the work juſt as well, I have no objections: for it is plain, that neither we nor the undertakers can loſe any thing by ſo magnificent a faſhion, if it were to prevail univerſally.

But, in fact, no man in his ſenſes, or out of his ſenſes, that I have heard of, ever yet thought of ſuch an extravagant abſurdity. This cannot

cannot be from parſimony; for many individuals could afford to have ſuch a ſplendid conſultation for themſelves or their families, juſt as well as to have a ſplendid funeral, or a ſplendid monument, or to make a jaunt to three or four watering places in ſucceſſion. It is plain, therefore, that ſuch a conſultation is generally thought uſeleſs at leaſt, if not worſe.

The conduct of Phyſicians and Surgeons, when themſelves or any of their families are ſick, affords a ſtill better proof and illuſtration of the ſame truth, and is indeed ſupreme and deciſive authority with reſpect to what is uſeful, or what is uſeleſs, or worſe than uſeleſs, in medical conſultations. With us all conſiderations of economy are out of the queſtion. Bad as we may be thought, we are not ſuch Cannibals as to prey on one another. We may all have, for nothing, to ourſelves and our families, as much aſſiſtance in point of phyſic and ſurgery as we chooſe. We feel ſtrongly, that we have not ſufficient calmneſs and firmneſs to judge and act properly, when the lives of thoſe are at ſtake in whom we are moſt tenderly intereſted: and as to ourſelves, when ſick, we all know, for it is a long ſettled point in phyſic, that every man who doctors himſelf, has a fool for his patient.

For theſe reaſons we are all accuſtomed, when ourſelves or our families are ſick, to aſk the aſſiſtance, not of *all*, but of *ſome*, of our profeſſional brethren. We all conſider it as the greateſt compliment that they can pay us, or rather as the moſt honourable and ſtrongeſt proof of their good opinion and confidence, when any of our brethren aſk our advice and aſſiſtance on ſuch occaſions. We have therefore no motive to make the conſultation leſs numerous, and a very ſtrong motive, in every ſuch caſe, to make it more numerous than what we know would be beſt for the patient; yet ſuch conſulations very ſeldom are of more than two or three of us. The reaſon of this we all know ſo well, and we can ſo eaſily make the caſe our own, that none of us (I truſt) ever dream

of

of being affronted, or taking it amiſs, when thoſe of our profeſſional brethren, with whom we live in intimacy and friendſhip, do not aſk our advice and aſſiſtance in ſuch a conſultation.

Let us, for the ſake of illuſtration, ſuppoſe the extreme caſe of the oppoſite kind, but correſponding exactly to what is actually done for the ſick poor in the Infirmary.

Let us ſuppoſe that a Phyſician or a Surgeon, when himſelf or any of his family needed the profeſſional aſſiſtance of his brethren, inſtead of calling in one, or two, or three of them, ſhould ſummon a grand conſultation of all the Members of the Royal College to which he belonged; I preſume the conſultation would inſtantly agree that it would be proper to ſecure the unfortunate gentleman's windows, and provide a ſteady keeper and a ſtrait waiſtcoat, for fear of what might happen in the next paroxyſm. Or if a man, meaning to engage in a lawſuit to recover a good eſtate, were to call a conſultation of all the lawyers at the bar, and if it were poſſible for them to agree in any opinion, I preſume they would agree in thinking him mad, even though he were one of their own brethren, who might have their advice for nothing.

Will it then be believed, or ſeriouſly maintained, that ſuch a conſultation can be rational or good for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, which it would be regarded as inſanity, to propoſe for the rich when ſick in their own houſes?

Some of the many objections to ſuch multifarious conſultations muſt be intelligible and obvious to every perſon of common ſenſe; others of them, quite obvious and familiar to us, muſt require ſome explanation to make them be underſtood by thoſe who are not of the medical profeſſion.

The conſultations which we read of in the works of Moliere, and Le Sage, and Fielding, and the New Bath Guide, and fifty other books, are certainly very entertaining; ſo perhaps would many of our real conſultations be if they were as generally known.

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But here an important diſtinction muſt be made, which in general has been overlooked. They are not equally entertaining to every body; commonly they are moſt entertaining to thoſe who are not intereſted in them, and not in the leaſt entertaining to thoſe who are. I do not know a worſe joke than a conſultation of Phyſicians is to the perſon who is the ſubject of it, except a conſultation of Surgeons: for this involves the horrible notion of pain in addition to danger or death.

Accordingly many a very facetious man, who uſed to have a large aſſortment of excellent ſtories and jokes on our Faculty, cannot think of one of them, when a few Surgeons are conſulting whether he ſhall loſe his life, or only one of his legs.

It is with them and the Faculty juſt as with thoſe wags who have an inexhauſtible ſtock of the beſt old jokes on the Clergy, and on Religion; but when they are dying of the dropſy, or going to be hanged, loſe at once all reliſh for them, and look almoſt as grave as the Phyſician or the Judge who condemned them.

I can ſuppoſe a man of ſuch firm nerves, that in the midſt of five and twenty Surgeons conſulting whether he ſhall be cut for the ſtone, he ſhall mind them no more than as many hobgoblins ſhown by a magic lanthorn, and withal of ſo facetious a diſpoſition, as to exclaim before they have ended their conſultation,

Centum me tetigere manus Aquilone gelatæ;
Non habui febrem, Symmache, nunc habeo.

But truly ſuch good nerves and ſuch drollery are very rare on ſuch occaſions; and the direct contrary of them is very common. I have read an epitaph, and an excellent one it is, on a man who died for fear on hearing the name of a great Phyſician; and if it were neceſſary, which I preſume it is not, as the fact is pretty well known, I could prove that within theſe few years, and within a

few

few miles of this city, a patient *bona fide* died of fright in leſs than two hours, on ſeeing one of our moſt eminent Surgeons who was ſent for to perform ſome operation on him, and who probably will not thank me for mentioning the caſualty in a printed Memorial. But I muſt do him the juſtice to ſay, that he was in no degree to blame, having behaved with the utmoſt caution and delicacy. Finding his patient irreſolute and reluctant, he withdrew for about an hour, to allow him time to recover his ſpirits, and on his return found him either dead or juſt dying.

Such caſualties are indeed rare: But there is nothing either rare or caſual in the horror and mental agonies which every perſon feels in ſuch circumſtances: they are as certain, and ſometimes as bad, as the bodily pain in an operation.

Many of our greateſt heroes, both in red coats and in blue, men who would boldly march up againſt a battery of cannon, or joyfully obey an Admiral's ſignal for cloſe action and breaking the line of battle of an enemy's fleet, will grow pale at the ſight of only two or three Surgeons, when theſe come to conſult about them. And many a poor patient, when he is ſet down in the midſt of five and twenty Surgeons in this Hoſpital, I have no doubt, feels all the horror, without the faith, of the Prophet Daniel, when firſt he took his ſeat in the den of lions.

Much of that mental ſuffering and horror, juſt like much pain in cutting for the ſtone, is unavoidable, and muſt be ſubmitted to without repining. But on this very account, any greater or unneceſſary mental agony ought the more carefully to be avoided. It is not only an evil, but as truly a moral wrong done to the ſufferer, as any unneceſſary bodily tortures inflicted on him in performing an operation. It is as truly an outrage on human nature when done in an Hoſpital to a poor man, as if it were done in a ſplendid manſion to the rich owner of it, where no Surgeon durſt propoſe ſuch a horrible conſultation.

Within

Within theſe three years, the Surgeons and their conſultations have made the old conſulting-room too hot for the Phyſicians, who were fain to apply to the Managers for the uſe of their room as a place to meet in. There I found them, moſt advantageouſly poſted, the laſt time that I attended in the Infirmary as Clinical Profeſſor, (winter 1798-9), the Surgeons being left undiſputed maſters of the old field of conſultation in the higher regions; that field which had ſerved both Phyſicians and Surgeons for more than fifty years. Much merriment, as I have been told, and ſome curious ſurmiſes were produced when the Phyſicians ſhifted their quarters, and took poſt ſeparately from the Surgeons. In truth, much was implied in it: more than has yet been explained. It is not yet preciſely known whether the Phyſicians were fairly elbowed out of the old conſulting-room by the annually increaſing Hoſt of Surgeons, or whether they had no taſte for chirurgical conſultations and chirurgical eloquence, or whether they had liked theſe things at firſt, but had got a complete ſurfeit of them at laſt: for wiſe men generally find, ſooner or later, that they may have enough of the very beſt things. I have not preſumed to aſk any queſtions on this point, either of Dr Hamilton or Dr Rutherford, for a reaſon which they, and every perſon who reads this paper with attention, will gueſs and underſtand at once. I have ſome five and twenty or thirty other queſtions, the leaſt of them of much more importance than that one, to put to them, which, in caſe of need, I ſhould wiſh them to anſwer in the moſt public and ſolemn manner. From doing this, I ſhould be very ſorry that they were precluded by any private or confidential intercourſe with me on the ſubject of this Memorial.

Such a numerous meeting, even of profeſſional men, is not a conſultation: it becomes a popular aſſembly: the leaders in it muſt be Orators: the buſineſs, if it can be done at all in ſuch a Parliament, (which I greatly doubt), muſt be done by plentiful freedom

of ſpeech, and debating, and haranguing. A modeſt man cannot, a well employed Surgeon will not, take a ſhare in ſuch debates; for which he can have neither time nor inclination. A man of ſenſe and real knowledge of his profeſſion will engage in them very ſeldom, and always with reluctance; well knowing, that in ninety-nine caſes of an hundred, the beſt medical debates and harangues that can be contrived will tend as little to the benefit of a patient as to the payment of the national debt. The natural talents and acquired accompliſhments which make a great Orator, are conſiderably different from thoſe which make a good Surgeon or Phyſician. That quickneſs, and keenneſs, and ardour of thought, that power of fancy, and fluency of words, even that vehemence of paſſion which hurries away the ſpeaker, and often his hearers too; nay, ſometimes that petulance and arrogance which enable an orator to miſrepreſent and browbeat an opponent who is a man of worth and modeſt ſenſe;—all theſe qualifications, ſo eſſential to the Orator, are the direct contrary of that patient thinking, that calm cool judgment, that pure and honeſt love of truth, that candid attention to the ſentiments of others, and willing deference to the opinion of another, even an opponent, when it appears to be juſt, that are moſt neceſſary in ſcience, and in the conſultations of Phyſicians or Surgeons.

The character of a medical orator is as well known, and as juſtly eſteemed in this country, as that of a coffeehouſe politician. A peculiar circumſtance in the ſyſtem of medical education in this Univerſity has made it very common with us; I mean the various medical ſocieties, in which our ſtudents very laudably exerciſe themſelves with great ardour and perſeverance in writing and debating on medical ſubjects.

Theſe ſocieties, on the whole, have done infinite good, and have contributed eſſentially to the proſperity of our medical ſchool; but,

but, like every other human inſtitution or contrivance, they have their inconveniences alſo.

Their chief uſe conſiſts in this, that they excite and preſerve among the ſtudents a kind of ardour and enthuſiaſm in the purſuits of knowledge, which are almoſt unknown in other Univerſities. They turn to ſome good account (though certainly not the beſt poſſible) that ſacred fire of youth, which in many other places is abſurdly ſmothered by ridiculous monkiſh reſtraints, and often is ſhown only by breaking fooliſh rules and idle forms, that are good for nothing but to be broken. Our ſtudents, far from being a parcel of young drones, liſtening quietly to the hum of a few old drones, which is too generally the caſe in other Univerſities, are commonly as eager to learn as we are to teach them. This our Librarians can amply teſtify, who find, to their ſorrow, that their office is the reverſe of a ſinecure.

Thoſe ſocieties ſerve many other good purpoſes. The practice of writing papers, bad as many of thoſe firſt eſſays muſt neceſſarily be, tends powerfully to give the authors of them ſome preciſion, and exactneſs, and arrangement of their medical notions; it accuſtoms them to reſearch and inveſtigation, and often gives them a taſte for ſuch laborious exertions, both by reading and by experiment. The practice of ſpeaking and debating gives them a quickneſs, readineſs, and command of their knowledge, real or ſuppoſed, on medical ſubjects: it teaches them to diſcuſs freely all medical opinions and reaſonings, and to detect the fallacy of them when they are fallacious, which is the caſe with moſt of them: it teaches them to think for themſelves, and completely exempts them from the thraldom of authority in ſcience; ſo completely, that many of them do not even know, and can hardly believe what it was, and have been much entertained when I explained it to them, and ſhowed them ſome inſtances of it.

The bad effects of thoſe debating ſocieties among our ſtudents are equally well known. On the principles already explained, (page 206.), a young man may in them be highly diſtinguiſhed by the exerciſe of talents the very reverſe of thoſe which are eſſential to the acquiſition of medical or of any ſcience. Such men will of courſe become orators, not men of ſcience or Phyſicians. In fact, I have known ſeveral inſtances of ſuch orators, who, after completing their education in phyſic, very wiſely quitted it as a profeſſion, and betook themſelves to the bar.

Another bad effect of them, common to thoſe who are orators and thoſe who are not, is, that the members of them, who, from their age and ſituation, can have no experience of their own to which they may truſt for the deciſion of ſuch queſtions, learn to conſider, not only every *opinion*, eſpecially thoſe of their Profeſſors, which is fair and right, but every *obſervation* and *teſtimony*, with reſpect to any *matter of fact* in phyſic, as equally a ſubject of diſpute. Such diſputes are not right, but only excuſable at beſt, even in a ſociety of ſtudents. When carried further, and brought into the world in publications, ſtill worſe if introduced into the practice and the conſultations of phyſic and ſurgery, they are not only uſeleſs and endleſs, but diſgraceful. Reaſoning being out of the queſtion with reſpect to the truth of particular matters of fact, and teſtimony with regard to them being rejected with contempt, it is hardly poſſible that ſuch diſputants ſhould ever agree at laſt in opinion, or contribute to each other's inſtruction, or concur in doing any good to a patient. They muſt be allowed to worry one another till they are tired, and to try it again and again, whenever they are ſo inclined. But it ſeems to me unjuſt and cruel, as well as unreaſonable, that others, eſpecially that their patients, either in hoſpitals or out of them, ſhould ſuffer by thoſe recreations of their medical adviſers.

Another

Another ſuppoſed bad effect of thoſe ſocieties (at leaſt in part, for it would be unjuſt, and contrary to a well-known truth, to impute it entirely to them) is, that the members of them are often tempted to waſte a great deal of precious time, and much labour and ingenuity, in uſeleſs ſpeculations and diſcuſſions. But this evil, as neceſſarily reſulting from the imperfect and erroneous ſtate of the ſcience and the art of phyſic, to a certain degree is unavoidable.

" *There muſt be a Tub to amuſe the Whale*," ſaid Dr Cullen to my father, who had expreſſed his concern at ſeeing ſo many of our ſtudents miſ-ſpend their time and labour in that manner, and had even taken the liberty of a friend and a colleague to remonſtrate a little with him on ſome of his own moſt favourite ſpeculations, neither the truth nor the uſefulneſs of which my father could perceive. Dr Cullen's anſwer was that of a man of genius, who thoroughly underſtood his own profeſſion, and the ſituation in which he was placed. It conveyed more knowledge of phyſic and of human nature than I have been able to find in a great and very popular work on the Theory of Phyſic, which has been more highly extolled than any other that has been publiſhed in my time; which ſeems to have been compoſed and publiſhed in ſober earneſt; which has been quoted a thouſand times with all the veneration due to the *Principia* of *Newton* or the Chemiſtry of *Lavoiſier;* and which, to the eternal diſgrace of this age and nation, and eſpecially of the medical gentlemen, has actually been miſtaken for a book of ſcience. It is a work of genius and fancy; but it bears no nearer reſemblance or relation to ſcience than the Rape of the Lock does to the hiſtorical writings of Tacitus.

Dr Cullen's notion, which I have often heard him expreſs fully and without a metaphor, was, that the firſt and moſt eſſential requiſite in a ſtudent of phyſic was ardour in the purſuits of ſcience; and that though this ardour might often be ill directed,

and

and much labour and ingenuity waſted on frivolous ſubjects, yet, on the whole, that every man with ardour and perſeverance, and no man without them, would make progreſs at laſt.

In their ſocieties that ardour of our ſtudents is excited to a degree of enthuſiaſm; ſometimes, if I may take the liberty to ſay ſo, approaching very near to phrenzy. Their debates on controverted points have ſometimes been conducted with all the violence of party-ſpirit. Within my memory, ſome of them fought with piſtols about their medical ſyſtems; many more were eager to do the ſame: from what I have ſeen and heard, I can have no doubt that ſome of them would gladly have died martyrs to their medical faith. One zealot, out of ſtark love and kindneſs, reſolved to convert me to that faith, came to my houſe on pretence of aſking ſome queſtions about what I had taught in my lectures, and regaled me with an harangue, of which I underſtood not one fiftieth part, but which laſted near an hour, and was delivered with ſuch vehemence of geſture and paſſion, that he not only ſweated profuſely, but literally foamed at the mouth. If he had gone but a very little farther, or had repeated ſuch exhibitions, it would have been my duty to have got him confined as a lunatic.

Two and thirty years ago, when Dr CULLEN's Tub to amuſe the Whale was in the higheſt repute, and, of courſe, was the great ſubject of enthuſiaſm among the ſtudents, one gentleman concluded his Theſis by declaring roundly, and I dare ſay very truly, that he would rather be in the wrong with Dr Cullen, than in the right with other people. *Si erravero, tamen, cum Neutono et Culleno, magna conantem errare, quam, cum vulgo hominum ignave ſapere, potius juvabit.*

Twelve or fourteen years afterwards, but long before Dr Cullen's death, when his Tub had been knocked to pieces, and the Whale had got another to play with, one of our ſtudents was ſo delighted with his new plaything, and held in ſuch contempt the old

one,

one, which perhaps had amuſed his father, that he began his Theſis, which I would not allow him to publiſh, by declaring flatly, that till the new doctrine was broached which he was going to expound, there had been either no principles or only falſe principles in phyſic. *Cum, præter unam doctrinam, nuper et nondum omnem in lucem editam, aut nullis aut falſis hactenus medicina principiis culta ſit, &c.* with an aſteriſk of reference to *Brunonis Elementa.* This Tub has ſince that time drifted over to the continent, and a few years ago afforded infinite amuſement and full employment to the great Kraken of Germany : perhaps it does ſo ſtill.

But the moſt complete and ludicrous ſpecimen of the importance of the debates, and of the orators in their own eyes, one far beyond any thing in the memoirs of P. P. clerk of this pariſh, and ſuch as I ſhould not venture to mention, were I not confident that others muſt remember it as well as I do, and that perhaps ſome copies of the papers may ſtill remain, was a newſpaper actually publiſhed in Edinburgh, containing an account of the debates in one of the medical ſocieties, or, for aught I know, in all of them, for the edification of the public ; ſomewhat in the ſtyle of the newſpaper accounts of the debates in the two Houſes of Parliament. If I remember right, I ſaw two or three numbers of that paper : I do not remember the year of it ; nor do I know how long it was continued : conſidering the nature of the debates, and the price of paper, print, and ſtamps, I preſume not many months.

Yet, after all, that part of our medical education has done much more good than harm. The good of it is great, general, and permanent : the evil partial, and, though not ſmall, generally tranſient.

——— Unus et alter
Forſitan hæc ſpernant juvenes, quibus, arte benigná,
E meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan.

Such

Such young men, of ſuperior ſenſe, will from the firſt obtain all the good and none of the evil which thoſe inſtitutions can produce. I have had the pleaſure of ſeeing many inſtances of this kind. Others, according as they have more or leſs of the coxcomb in their compoſition, and according to the opportunities they have of improvement, by being actually engaged in the practice of their profeſſion, may not be thoroughly cured of debating and haranguing for five, ten, or twenty years: ſome are abſolutely incurable; and are as great orators, and as little phyſicians, at the age of ſixty, as they were at four and twenty. This they generally find to their ſorrow, when it is too late. With a view to the one thing needful, I mean the guineas, *the guineas*, the prattle of a London apothecary, and ſome little knowledge of Quadrille, will go farther than all the ſcience and all the eloquence that ever were acquired or diſplayed in a medical ſociety or a medical conſultation.

Much, however, may be ſaid in excuſe for thoſe medical gentlemen, of whatever branch of the profeſſion, who fall into the error to which I allude. They are miſled by ſome plauſible but deceitful analogies. A ſmart boy juſt let out of the nurſery to engage in the ſtudy of Phyſic, as ſoon as he diſcovers what are the uſual ſubjects of medical diſputes, and how theſe diſputes are conducted, will inſtantly think of his old wholeſome exerciſe of ſhuttlecock; and of courſe will reckon thoſe the greateſt proficients, and the beſt models for his imitation, who keep them up the longeſt without any deciſive or apparent advantage on either ſide.

A young man, of good talents alſo, but riper years and judgment, who has already made ſome progreſs in the ſublime ſcience of newſpapers, will almoſt certainly be deceived by the dazzling but treacherous and very dangerous analogy of politics. Every ſuch youth muſt perceive at once, what we all know to be true, that any man, even in a coffeehouſe or an alehouſe, who chooſes to ſpeak much

much about politics, becomes *ipſo facto* a politician, and is reſpected accordingly by all who know him. But in ſome other houſes the effect of that more vigorous exerciſe of the lungs which we call public ſpeaking is much more admirable, and would be incredible were it not a matter of daily obſervation. In a very ſhort time, *citius quam aſparagi coquuntur*, it converts fops, jockeys, and ruined gameſters into the firmeſt and moſt virtuous patriots, and the moſt conſummate ſtateſmen. It has even been ſaid, that the ſtrong vociferation of two monoſyllables, *aye* and *no*, according to certain rules, has nearly the ſame effect. But this I doubt.

It is much to be lamented, for the ſake of the ſcience and the art of phyſic in all its branches, as well as of thoſe who practiſe it, and of thoſe on whom it is practiſed, that this unlucky analogy of politics has of late been ſo much attended to, while the more juſt and ſtrict analogies of other ſciences and other arts have been totally overlooked.

No man ever yet became, or was even ſuppoſed to become a good mathematician or a good chemiſt by haranguing and diſputing about mathematics and chemiſtry. Very few good Generals have been made by debating and voting about the art of war. Not one good Seaman, or Painter, or Fiddler, or Cook, or Poſtillion, or Surgeon, or Phyſician, ſo far as I have heard, was ever yet made by debating, haranguing, and voting about their reſpective profeſſions.

Even in that nobleſt of all arts and ſciences, Politics, which is learned in its utmoſt purity and practiſed in its higheſt perfection by ſuch means, a very numerous conſultation, though of the greateſt and moſt experienced practitioners, is liable to the ſame inconveniences as a very multitudinous medical conſultation, and ſeldom does any good to the patient; frequently ending in "ſome very "harmleſs but inſignificant preſcription."

No College of Phyſicians or Surgeons on the face of the earth can in conſcience or common decency pretend to be either wiſer or better than the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament aſſembled. Yet we all know what generally happens when they engage in very numerous conſultations for the ſafety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign and his kingdoms.

I wave here all conſideration of thoſe controverted points, which evil-minded people conceive to involve the everlaſting buſineſs of Ins and Outs, and Loaves and Fiſhes. If our ſtateſmen, to the number of two hundred, or of five hundred, were really to conſult about ſuch points, it would evidently be as impoſſible for them ever to agree about a preſcription, as it would be for any four of them playing at Whiſt together to be all on one ſide.

I ſhall conſider only ſuch of their conſultations as have nothing to do with Ins and Outs and Loaves and Fiſhes, but relate to ſubjects which they muſt all underſtand, in which they are honeſtly intereſted, and act to the beſt of their judgment, unbiaſſed by any kind of party-ſpirit. Since this Memorial went to the preſs, there has been a grand conſultation of both Houſes to conſider of ſome good and effectual preſcription for the faſhionable diſtemper called Adultery. The ſubject muſt have been quite familiar to them, as many of the greateſt and wiſeſt men in the nation, and alſo their wives, and their ſons, and their daughters, and their fathers and their mothers for many generations, have been grievouſly afflicted with that diſtemper. The conſultation was managed in both Houſes in a grand ſtyle, ſuch as has ſeldom been equalled, and perhaps never ſurpaſſed, in the conſulting-room of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. The conſultation was continued for many days in each Houſe, the moſt eminent practitioners giving their opinion and advice at great length,

and

and with much vehemence. We all know the reſult: each Houſe was nearly equally divided: and the deciſions of the two Houſes were contradictory. The practitioners could not agree on any preſcription: and accordingly they gave us none. *Plectuntur Achivi.* For aught that the grand conſultation has done for us, 500,000 of the beſt of us may ſuffer ſorely by that faſhionable diſtemper before next Chriſtmas; and ſome of us may exhibit the laſt dreadful ſymptom of it; the political name of which I do not know, but in phyſic we call it Exoſtoſes on the ſkull.

More than a fourth part of my life (which has not been a very ſhort one) has elapſed ſince our ſtateſmen began to conſult, in the ſame ſpirited ſtyle, about the abolition of the Slave Trade: they have had conſultations innumerable about it, in the courſe of twelve years or more; and have actually waſted more bad breath on that one ſubject, than all the conſumptive patients in the world have had ſince the creation of it. To the beſt of my judgment, they are at this hour rather farther from agreeing about it than they were the day before they began to it. They have indeed, after much difficulty and moſt violent altercations, (far beyond any that I have ever known among Phyſicians), agreed on "ſome very "harmleſs but inſignificant preſcriptions:" but, if they continue as they have begun, I doubt whether my great-grandchildren will live to ſee the end of their conſultations, or of the Slave Trade.

My confidence either in the wiſdom or in the virtue of politicians and ſtateſmen is very ſmall, which is probably owing to my profound ignorance of their trade, and to my never having had the happineſs of any perſonal acquaintance with thoſe who practiſe it. Yet, if one or two of the *Ins* were to meet with one or two of the *Outs*, quietly and privately, in conſultation, to conſider of any the moſt difficult queſtion that could be diſcuſſed,

for example, a propoſal for a new adminiſtration on a broad bottom, even I ſhould expect that they would ſoon come to a right underſtanding; and agree as perfectly as any two or four of the greateſt Phyſicians in London could do about taking their Guineas, and ſending a patient to be ſtewed at Bath, or to die at Briſtol. Not one of the orators, I humbly conceive, though he had the lungs of Stentor, would waſte one ſhred, or beſtow one blaſt, of them, on his brethren. But the caſe, I preſume, would be widely different, if the ſame Honourable or Right Honourable Gentlemen were ſet down on the green benches in St Stephen's Chapel the day of a call of the houſe, and were obliged to conſult in public on the ſame queſtion. Then the ſpirit of the Orator, the Politician, the Demagogue, the Whig, the Tory, the In, the Out, the Miniſter, and the Patriot, would be kindled in a moment, and would produce an exploſion more loud, more uſeleſs, and more pernicious than a fire-damp in a Newcaſtle coal-pit.

But in truth, neither the violence nor the inveteracy of party-men in politics, great as they are juſtly thought, and generally known, can give to thoſe who are unacquainted with the diſputes among medical men, any notion of the implacable rancour with which they have generally been conducted. Politicians, after the moſt violent diſputes and quarrels, the moſt inveterate enmity, the bittereſt revilings and mutual accuſations, have been known to unite cordially, to become the deareſt friends and ſworn brothers, even for the trifling conſideration of private intereſt; while to ſerve their country, though but in the humble ſtation of underſtrappers, Whigs have become Tories, and Tories, Whigs: They have become all things to all men; and have returned at laſt to what they were at firſt.

To the beſt of my knowledge and belief nothing of this kind

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ever happened in phyſic. Thoſe who engage keenly in medical diſputes generally are men

" Whoſe ſouls the Furies ſteel'd,
" And curs'd with hearts unknowing how to yield."

The true *Odium Medicum* approaches nearer than any thing elſe known in human nature to the genuine *Odium Theologicum.* It has even been doubted by competent judges which of the two is the worſe; for though Phyſicians have never yet carried the joke ſo far as to burn alive their adverſaries whom they could not convert, as Dominican monks and others uſed to do very ſucceſsfully with their obſtinate opponents, yet there is reaſon to ſuſpect, that this reſerve and delicacy on the part of our Faculty, has proceeded more from want of power than from any want of good-will to the work. It is certain at leaſt, that at one time, about two hundred and fifty years ago, in Spain and Portugal, they fairly tried it, and that they had well nigh ſucceeded in their attempt.

There can be no doubt, that the inveterate rancour of medical men in all their profeſſional diſputes, is one of the bad effects of " the fruit of that forbidden tree, whoſe mortal taſte brought " death into the world, and all our woe," or of ſome degenerate baſtard ſort of it, which is every where met with, and ſeems to produce effects almoſt as bad as the genuine poiſon. It is remarkable, that of the fruit of the tree of medical knowledge it is eaſy to get a mouthful, and very difficult to get a bellyful, it being in ſuch general requeſt; and ſtill more remarkable, that the ſmalleſt portion of it, ſo ſmall a portion as to elude all obſervation, often produces more violent and worſe effects, than the largeſt quantity of it that any perſon has hitherto been able to procure for himſelf. In ſome conſtitutions, the effects of a ſmall particle of it are more ridiculous

ridiculous than dangerous, the patient only prattling fooliſhly, and acting abſurdly, in a thouſand ways, but not becoming miſchievous or outrageous. In other conſtitutions, the effects of a ſmall mouthful of that unlucky fruit are much more alarming than thoſe of deadly nightſhade, or the ſtrongeſt Scotch whiſky; the patient not only talks, and writes, and acts abſurdly, and ſometimes outrageouſly, but quarrels implacably with all who differ from him in opinion, eſpecially with his own profeſſional brethren.

Hence it is that much more than ninety-nine parts in the hundred of all that has been written on the Theory and Practice of Phyſic for more than 2000 years, is abſolutely uſeleſs, and unworthy to be known but as a matter of curioſity, or a miſerable example and warning of the worſt errors to which we are prone. A large proportion of thoſe writings conſiſts of controverſies, generally carried on with the bittereſt animoſity. Though I am not ſo well acquainted with the particulars, I know in general that the ſame is true with reſpect to the writings on the Theory and Practice of Surgery.

Before any perſon not of the medical profeſſion, and unacquainted with the hiſtory and the preſent ſtate of it, can believe ſuch things, it is neceſſary that he ſhould underſtand them. For this purpoſe a very ſhort explanation and a few examples of the ſubjects of medical controverſies, and of the manner in which their diſputes have been conducted, may ſuffice.

Thoſe to whom the ſubject is new will find it leſs ſurpriſing, and more credible, if they will conſider what is well known with reſpect to Religion, and the numberleſs keen controverſies to which it has given riſe. Even with the aid of the Holy Scriptures to enlighten their underſtanding, determine their faith, and ſoften their hardneſs of heart, Theologians have differed rancorouſly on a thouſand points. What better then could be expected of phyſicians and ſurgeons, when left entirely to the faint light of their

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own reaſon to lead them through the vaſt wilderneſs of medical ſcience?

We have had in phyſic many great *ſects*, as they are called; differing from one another not in a few particular tenets, as the various ſects of Chriſtians do, but differing totally in their firſt and moſt general principles, juſt as the Heathen do from the Jews, or Mahometans from Chriſtians. Long before the Chriſtian era there had been innumerable diſputes among phyſicians about each others abſurdities: concerning which we have but very imperfect information; enough however to convince us that our great predeceſſors were neither wiſer nor better than we are. Soon after the Chriſtian era, a great ſyſtem, that of *Galen*, was introduced into phyſic, which being more unintelligible, and where it was intelligible, more extravagantly abſurd, than any which had gone before it, of courſe ſoon came to prevail univerſally. It had moreover the peculiar advantage of involving in itſelf innumerable, and uſeleſs, and endleſs controverſies, logical as well as phyſical; ſo that thoſe who ſtudied and adopted it, had no occaſion to go any farther for exerciſe, and recreation, and diſtinction. It is therefore not ſurpriſing that it ſhould have laſted much longer than any other ſyſtem in phyſic. It prevailed univerſally for ſeveral centuries before the extinction of letters; and as during the dark ages it prevailed in the Greek empire, and as it was adopted, though corrupted, by the Arabians, and made the foundation of their ſyſtem, and as on the revival of Greek letters in the Weſt the ſyſtem of Galen was triumphantly revived in all its glory, and prevailed for almoſt two centuries more, it may be ſaid to have flouriſhed for 1500 years.

Even the revival of it produced a moſt violent warfare in our Faculty, and kept them embroiled for more than fifty years.

Long before the Galeniſts had completely beaten the Arabians out of the field, both parties were moſt violently aſſaulted and annoyed

annoyed by the Chemiſts, the great leader of whom (Paracelſus) actually committed to the flames, in public and with due formality, not the perſons of any of his living adverſaries, but the voluminous works of Galen and Avicenna; the former the great apoſtle of the Greek, as the latter was of the Arabian ſchool. Before the Chemiſts had quite exterminated the Galeniſts, they were themſelves attacked moſt furiouſly by the Mathematical Phyſicians, who indeed gave no quarter either to Galeniſts or Chemiſts. Then followed within theſe hundred years an endleſs hoſt of Stahlians, Hoffmanians, Boerhaavians, Cullenians, &c. &c. down to Zoonomians, and modern Pneumatic Chemiſts; who I truſt will keep us all alive and merry for a dozen years at leaſt; and when they have ſerved their time and their hour is come, *nam omneis una manet nox*, will give place to others, as good in every reſpect, and eſpecially as fit to amuſe the Whale.

In the midſt of all theſe diſputes and contradictory ſyſtems of Phyſicians, one very general and moſt inveterate ſchiſm has ſubſiſted almoſt uniformly, both in ancient and modern times, for about 2000 years, and I have no doubt will laſt for 2000 more: for at this day and in this country it flouriſhes in as great vigour as it did in ancient Greece in the time of Serapion, the great author of it. I mean the diſtinction of Phyſicians into Dogmatiſts and Empirics: the former profeſſing to underſtand the nature and cauſes of diſeaſes, and the mode of operation of the remedies which they employ to cure them; the latter pretending to no ſuch knowledge, profeſſing to deſpiſe ſuch ſpeculations, and to truſt to experience alone. Of this controverſy, and of the rancour with which it has been carried on, it is a ſufficient account and ſpecimen here juſt to obſerve, that the names of the contending ſects, which were originally honourable terms of diſtinction, have long ſince, in conſequence of their mutual revilings, become common terms of reproach and contempt. *Dogmatiſt* originally and literally

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ly meant exactly what we ſhould now call a man of ſcience: but has long been underſtood to mean an arrogant, poſitive, uncandid man, who deſpiſes experience, and teaches or ſpeaks in a ſtyle of abſolute authority, and is obſtinately attached to opinions unſupported by experience, and often repugnant to it. *Empiric* means literally one who regards experience; but has long been underſtood to mean an ignorant impudent pretender to phyſic: it is juſt ſynonymous with Quack or Mountebank.

The diſputes among the Empirics themſelves, at leaſt among the moſt modern of them, for I do not know how the ancient Empirics managed that matter, have been as obſtinate as any among the Dogmatiſts; but leſs entertaining, and more diſgraceful to our profeſſion. Reaſoning with them being out of the queſtion, their diſputes are about what they are pleaſed to call obſervations, experiments, and facts. Concerning theſe their teſtimonies are totally irreconcileable, and, being tranſlated into plain Engliſh, amount exactly to giving one another the lie every moment. It is a melancholy truth, that many of our pretended medical facts are leſs to be truſted, and often much more dangerous, than our medical theories.

And, "Who," it will naturally be aſked, "is this Drawcanſir, "who ſets all his profeſſional brethren at defiance, and treats their "opinions, and controverſies, and obſervations, with ſuch con-"temptuous freedom? Is he an Empiric or a Dogmatiſt? What "are his Dogmas?" The queſtions are very pertinent, and may eaſily be anſwered, thus.

He neither is, nor ever was, nor ever will be, either an Empiric or a Dogmatiſt. He would have been a keen Dogmatiſt, but that he found at leaſt ninety-nine in the hundred of medical Dogmas were falſe, and many of them ſtark nonſenſe. He would have been a determined Empiric, but that he found at leaſt ninety-nine in the hundred of Empirical facts were as falſe, and more than

that proportion of their remedies as inſignificant, and as dangerous, as any of the Dogmas of their opponents. Of courſe he now lives a ſad outcaſt from both parties, juſt like a man excommunicated as an Atheiſt by a congregation of Fanatics, and expelled as a Fanatic by a Royal Academy of Atheiſts. He is made of the ſame ſtuff, and put together in the ſame manner as other men, and of courſe in all probability is neither wiſer nor better than they are. Far from being more placid and tractable, he is more iraſcible and obſtinate than moſt men; and if he had ever engaged in medical diſputes, would probably have been as violent, as abſurd, as implacable, and as ridiculous, as any of his predeceſſors or cotemporaries. He has ſuch a genius for quarrelling with his profeſſional brethren, that, without even the pretence of any difference in medical opinions, and purely on account of certain differences in morality, he has quarrelled with ſome of them irreconcileably, and refuſed ever again to conſult with them; firſt telling them, in the plaineſt poſſible terms, the reaſons of that unalterable reſolution; juſt to prevent any miſunderſtanding, or the repetition of ſuch ſcenes as we read of in Gil Blas. He knows accordingly that ſome of his profeſſional brethren would be very glad to ſee him hanged; and he would not remain very long inconſolable if the apotheoſis of ſome of them were performed, or if they ſhould perform it themſelves, in that ignoble manner. He has taught the Theory and the Practice of Phyſic in the Univerſity of Edinburgh for four and twenty years, without once throwing out a Tub to amuſe the Whale. He never thought he had ingenuity enough to make ſuch a Tub, or dexterity enough to manage any of the numberleſs ready made Tubs which were floating around him. He obſerved, to his great comfort, that he had no occaſion to take that trouble; as the Whale has always found ſome Tub to amuſe itſelf withal, and has never yet ſhewn the ſmalleſt inclination either to ſwallow or to overſet him and his little bark. As he never did, nor

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ever intends to do it any harm, he is not in the leaſt afraid of the Whale. He has not had wiſdom enough to keep himſelf out of all diſputes and controverſies, even in ſcience; and in thoſe wherein he has engaged, he has been abundantly acrimonious; as his opponents (probably) will be ready to certify upon oath: or if they ſhould not, it is of little conſequence: the fact may be eſtabliſhed without their help, or in ſpite of them. But hitherto, notwithſtanding all temptations, and provocations, and plenty of bad examples, he has eſcaped the folly of any medical diſputes or controverſies; not by any ſuperiority of underſtanding, for he knows that men, much wiſer and abler, and more learned than he is, have fallen into that folly; but by his ſtrong ſenſe of ridicule, which on that point was to him irreſiſtible. From his earlieſt youth he was admitted behind the curtain, and let into the ſecret of the medical drama. Having acquired a little notion of ſome other ſciences, and of ſcience in general, before he engaged in the ſtudy of phyſic, he was from the firſt both mortified and entertained with the contraſt which he ſaw. He ſoon perceived, that, with reſpect to phyſic, each ſucceſſive age had much more trouble to unlearn the bad, than to learn the good, of thoſe which went before it, and ſtill more to diſtinguiſh between the good and the bad which itſelf produced. After two and thirty of the beſt years of his life ſpent in learning, in teaching, and in practiſing phyſic, he has found much to confirm, and nothing to ſhake that unfavourable opinion of his own profeſſion, and of a vaſt majority of thoſe who have taught and practiſed it. Being a great philoſopher, of the ſect of Democritus, he thinks it much wiſer, as well as pleaſanter, to laugh than either to cry or be angry at ſuch things: and as he would have thought it in others, ſo in himſelf he would think it perfect Quixotiſm, and truly a kind of Knight Errantry, to attempt to ſet every body right; knowing well that not one in a thouſand chooſes to be ſet right. He would as ſoon think of building a magnificent

dwelling-houſe on the Goodwin ſands, as of building his fame on a work of medical reaſoning or medical obſervation; even if literary fame were, what it is not, the chief object of his ambition. He never could propoſe to himſelf either honour or advantage in telling fifty of his cotemporaries and 500 of his predeceſſors, though in the civilleſt manner and only by implication, that they were knaves and fools, liars and quacks, or in being told the ſame in equally civil, or perhaps in plain terms by many of his cotemporaries. He never had the vanity to ſuppoſe that his talents were greater, or that his efforts would be more ſucceſsful in medical ſcience than thoſe of many hundreds of his cotemporaries, and many thouſands of his predeceſſors, or to think that any addition which he might make to it could bear a ſenſible proportion to the whole ſtock even of real medical ſcience. He has ſtudied medical ſyſtems, and reaſonings, and obſervations, till he was ſick, and tried many dozens of boaſted but very uſeleſs remedies, till he was aſhamed of what he was doing. But far from exclaiming, " All is vanity," and giving up the point in deſpair, his chief object, both in the teaching and in the practice of phyſic, has been to ſeparate the little that he found true and uſeful, from the vaſt maſs that he found erroneous and uſeleſs, or worſe. He knows many of the peculiar difficulties which have hitherto retarded the progreſs of medicine, and many of the cauſes which have produced the worſt corruption of it. He is convinced that none of theſe are hopeleſs, and is confident that the ſcience of medicine will yet make great and happy progreſs. The great Volume of Nature lies open to Phyſicians of every ſect, and every opinion; but they muſt learn to read it fairly, like men of ſcience, who ſeek for truth alone; not perverſely, like diſputants contending for victory; or, as ſome wrong-headed ſectaries ſeem too often to have read the Bible, each moſt abſurdly aſſuming the dangerous and wicked principle, that

Hic

Hic liber eſt in quo quærit ſua dogmata quiſque ;
Atque in quo reperit dogmata quiſque ſua.

Thoſe violent diſputes and quarrels among Phyſicians about their Dogmas, or Theories as they are commonly called, were not ſo remote from practice, and from the buſineſs of conſultations, as may at firſt be thought by thoſe who are little acquainted with the ſubject. Many of their theories, though not all of them, had an immediate and powerful influence on their practice. If Phyſicians of different ſects had been required to conſult with one another, it is ſcarce poſſible that they ſhould ever have agreed in their concluſions, differing as they did totally and irreconcileably in their firſt principles.

But the diſputes among Phyſicians fundamentally of the ſame great ſect, and differing only as to ſome minute particulars, almoſt unintelligible and imperceptible to other men, have been ſtill more violent and rancorous. The ſame thing, as every body knows, has happened to many fanatical ſectaries, who profeſſed and called themſelves Chriſtians, and yet perſecuted one another moſt inveterately about diſputes of no moment as to their welfare either here or hereafter. Thus, for example, the *Homoouſions* and the *Homoiouſions* of the Greek church perſecuted one another with the moſt unrelenting hatred, far worſe than ever ſubſiſted between Mahometans and Chriſtians, though they differed only by one letter, and that one the ſmalleſt letter of the Greek alphabet ; ſo very ſmall, that the name of it has, even in our language, become proverbial, to denote the ſmalleſt poſſible or conceivable object of the human underſtanding ; yet ſo inveterate were they, that the party (I have forgotten which of the two it was) that had got the better of the other, not by argument, for that was impoſſible, but by the help of the ſtrong ſecular arm, had the malice to contrive

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and actually to employ a machine to force open the mouths of the refractory heretics whom they had to deal with, and to cram the Euchariſt down their throats. I fear we need not range to ſuch diſtant countries and remote ages, to find more than ſufficient examples of violence and inveteracy in diſputes of no conſequence in religion; and I am ſure we can match the worſt of them in phyſic.

But, in truth, Phyſicians (and though I cannot ſtate ſo well the minute particulars, I am ſure in general that I may ſafely add Surgeons too) have differed as much, and have been as violent and inveterate in their diſputes about points of Practice as about points of Theory. I do not know of any one diſeaſe, or any one mode of practice in any diſeaſe, or any one remedy to be employed occaſionally in different diſeaſes, certainly none of any conſequence, that has not been the ſubject of obſtinate controverſies.

Bleeding, Bliſtering, Vomits, Purges, Antimony, Mercury, Opium, Peruvian Bark, all have ſhared the ſame fate.

We have uſed the Bark (as a cure for agues) for near 150 years, and have found it a powerful remedy; yet for more than 100 years it was conſtantly a ſubject of diſpute. The greateſt Phyſicians (both practical and dogmatic) of modern times, Hoffman, Stahl, and Boerhaave, all diſliked and dreaded it, though for different reaſons; and they, and many medical authors of inferior note, have confidently mentioned, as the bad effects of the bark when employed to cure agues, thoſe very ſymptoms or diſeaſes which they muſt have known to have been common before the bark was introduced into Europe, and which they muſt often have ſeen in patients, in whom the ague had continued long for want of the bark to ſtop it. In ſome parts of Europe thoſe diſputes about the bark are not yet ſettled. Such diſputes, with great ſubmiſſion, I think come as near as any one can reaſonably wiſh, to the great controverſy about tranſubſtantiation.

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We have uſed Mercury near 300 years as a cure for the faſhionable diſtemper; and, though ſtrictly ſpeaking, not *univerſally* with ſucceſs, yet with ſucceſs infinitely more general and more complete than we have experienced from any other remedy in any other diſeaſe. But it has, during all that time, been the ſubject of inceſſant and keen diſputes; and at this hour the diſputes about it are more violent than ever they were. It is diſputed even whether mercury (ſtrictly ſpeaking) ever did any good in the pox; whether it be quite inert, or whether it has generally done harm; and it is maintained that it is not the mercury itſelf, but ſomething united with it, a kind of air, (oxygene), which has done ſo much good, and which may be found in much larger proportion, as well as in much greater quantity, in the pureſt air that we breathe, in pure ſpring water, and in aquafortis: which may be found alſo in white arſenic, and in fifty other ſubſtances; but is more eaſily ſeparated from the mercury (when duly prepared for uſe) than from almoſt any other ſubſtance yet known. But, to loſe no time, ſome hundreds of patients have been tried with aquafortis, properly diluted with water, and drunk like lemonade. The reſult of theſe trials is, of courſe, a maſs of irreconcileable contradictions.

About 230 years ago, an eminent French Phyſician, Botallus, who was Phyſician to Henry III. of France, wrote a famous book on Bloodletting; in which he maintained, that it was the beſt of all remedies, and proper in every diſeaſe, even in a dropſy. Soon after his death, a great deal of this bloody practice was generally adopted in ſeveral countries, but eſpecially in France, where much of it keeps its ground even to this day. Not all the ridicule of Gil Blas has been able to get the better of it. Though the name of Sangrado is Spaniſh, (denoting a bleeding,) and though the ſcene of the adventures is laid in Spain, it is well known that the alluſion was to the practice of phyſic in France.

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In about fifty years after the time of Botallus, another famous phyſician and medical author, Van Helmont, a Fleming, maintained with ſtill more violence, (for he was one of our moſt ſpirited and eloquent diſputants), that bleeding in any caſe whatever was downright murder, (or worſe, executioner's work, *carnificina*, which in our language we have no one word to expreſs). Van Helmont died like a hero, of the conſequences of a pleuriſy, in which he would not allow himſelf to be bled. Part of one of his letters written when he knew he was within four and twenty hours of his death, and mentioning that ſuch was his ſituation, is ſtill extant.

Theſe extravagancies ſeem to have got the better of the patience of Boerhaave himſelf, whoſe candour and good nature are unrivalled in phyſic. He mentions the controverſy, and the oppoſite doctrines of the two great leaders in it; but without deigning to refute them, or attempting to reconcile them, or to argue with them, very properly diſmiſſes them both with a ſmart kick on the breech, conveyed in two Latin words; *Uter inſanior?* Which is the madder?

Violent and plainly irreconcileable as that diſpute was about bleeding in every diſeaſe, or in no diſeaſe, it was all calm philoſophy, and Chriſtian charity, and true brotherly love, when compared to another diſpute about bleeding, which began thirty or forty years ſooner, (or rather was revived, for it had been agitated, though with leſs violence, in ancient times), and continued much longer: indeed it is not quite ſettled yet.

I allude to the noble diſpute, unqueſtionably the beſt ſpecimen which the hiſtory of medicine affords of the importance of our controverſies, and of the manner in which they are conducted, about the proper mode of bleeding in a pleuriſy, (ſtitch in the ſide); whether from the arm of the ſide affected, or from the oppoſite arm.

It was another pragmatical Frenchman, one Briſſot, who ſet our Faculty together by the ears on this knotty point; which I ought to mention is exactly of the ſame nature and the ſame importance with that puzzle which every body knows embroiled the whole empire of Lilliput in a calamitous civil war: the queſtion about breaking an egg at the big or the ſmall end.

The Arabian Phyſicians, either not underſtanding Galen, or taking moſt heretically the authority of Aretæus in oppoſition to his, had introduced the barbarous practice of bleeding from the oppoſite arm, for the ſake of revulſion, as it was called. This hereſy had been eſtabliſhed as the orthodox ſyſtem of all regular Phyſicians for near 700 years. Briſſot having learned Greek enough to conſtrue Galen, ſoon diſcovered that they were all in the wrong; and with laudable zeal made ſuch haſte to promulgate the great diſcovery, that in a few years he had ſet the Faculty in a flame all over Europe. In Spain and Portugal, the medical reformers had like to have been literally in the flames: for the old orthodox Phyſicians, all of whom had been bred in the Arabian ſchool, enraged at ſuch a monſtrous innovation as that of bleeding from the arm of the ſide affected, endeavoured to get them puniſhed judicially as heretics: declaring that they were the Lutherans of Phyſic, and that their doctrines were as dangerous as thoſe of Luther. Briſſot died at Liſbon, (whither he had gone in the proſecution of ſome botanical reſearches), time enough to eſcape the animadverſion of the inquiſition: but not till after he had promulgated his doctrine, and got ſome diſciples, fully as zealous as he was himſelf. The diſpute grew warm: it was referred to the Univerſity of Evora, the Doctors of which could not agree about it. It was referred to the Univerſity of Salamanca: and the Univerſity of Salamanca ſeems almoſt to have loſt its wits on this momentous occaſion. By means of ſome chicane, as it is ſaid, that learned body was at firſt, that is, after many delays and long and

violent diſputes, prevailed on to give a wrong deciſion, in favour of the Arabian ſyſtem: but on conſidering it again more fully, gave it at laſt in favour of Galen and Briſſot. But the inveterate Arabian Doctors would not acquieſce. They appealed to the Emperor Charles the Fifth, their Sovereign, repreſenting to him the importance of the queſtion, the danger to his ſubjects from the Briſſotian hereſy, and the neceſſity of cruſhing and exterminating thoſe Medical Lutherans, in order to preſerve the ancient eſtabliſhed faith in all its purity. It is ſaid that Charles the Fifth was on the point of yielding to their importunities and clamours; when luckily his good Couſin and brother Sovereign Charles the Third, Duke of Savoy, fell ſick of a pleuriſy, and died of it, though he was bled by his Phyſicians from the arm of the oppoſite ſide, according to the old orthodox ſyſtem. This fortunate accident, which was a noble ſubject of triumph to the Briſſotian Heretics, ſaved that wiſe Monarch the Emperor from the diſgrace of interfering in a medical diſpute, and left the Phyſicians at full liberty to worry one another about it till they were tired, which they were not for more than two hundred years. The number of Phyſicians in that time who have either expreſsly or incidentally given their opinions on the controverſy, muſt have been nearly as great as that of the Phyſicians who broke their eggs either at the big or the ſmall end. We have a catalogue by Moreau, and a ſhort account of the doctrine of the chief authors, in chronological order, who had expreſsly written on the controverſy, as it ſtood in 1630; that is, in little more than one hundred years after Briſſot began the diſpute. At that time the number amounted to more than an hundred, including one ſolitary German Theologian, (Hieronymus Tragus), who, not finding, I preſume, controverſies enough in his own province, moſt gallantly carried arms as a volunteer in ours, where he was ſure to ſee plenty of ſervice.

Long

Long before Phyſicians had done with that controverſy about bleeding, they were embroiled in a thouſand others, leſs general indeed, but not leſs inveterate. One inſtance more I ſhall give of them, not only on account of the ſpirit with which it was carried on, but alſo becauſe it occurred among the Fellows of the Royal College of Phyſicians in London, who have at all times been diſtinguiſhed for their learning, their talents, and their liberal manners; and who, very juſtly, regard themſelves, and are regarded by others, as Beings of a higher nature than the Phyſicians of any other country on the face of the earth. I allude to the violent diſpute about purging in the ſecondary fever of the ſmall pox.

The good old orthodox practice in that dreadful diſeaſe was to keep the patient as hot as was conſiſtent with life; ſometimes much hotter. On the ſame abſurd but well-eſtabliſhed principle, purging of any kind, even the gentleſt, was reprobated as abſolutely pernicious. Sydenham, who had the merit of introducing, at leaſt of propoſing, a cooler regimen in the ſmall pox, ſeems to have been afraid of doing much in oppoſition to that ſyſtem; and only hints that a cooling purge (and a very gentle one compared to the drenches that he uſed to preſcribe in other diſeaſes) ſhould be given on the 13th day, but not ſooner. Such a hereſy could not be endured; eſpecially from ſuch a man as Sydenham, whom many of his more learned and thorough bred cotemporaries ſeem to have held very cheap, and regarded as only a better ſort of Quack. Morton declared roundly that he never knew a patient in the ſmall pox ſuffer though he had no ſtool for twenty days. Gradually the diſpute grew warm. Friend, the greateſt of the purging Doctors, recommended the practice ſtrongly, as in many caſes the patient's beſt or only chance for life; and, as if determined to outdo Morton, publiſhed a caſe (communicated by his friend Dr Harriſon) of a patient very ill of the confluent ſmall pox, who, though he had a pretty ſmart natural purging, got two

or three ſuch drenches to boot, that he had near an hundred ſtools in five days; and with the moſt ſalutary effect.

Such Phyſicians were not likely ever to agree in conſultation, or on any occaſion; and very likely to quarrel, and come to blows, for want of better arguments. There is a tradition, which I heard three and thirty years ago, from a cotemporary of the parties, that one of the purging Doctors and one of the anti-purgers meeting at the entry to the hall of the College of Phyſicians, ſoon came to hard words, and from hard words to hard blows; the reſult of which was, that the purging Doctor knocked the other down, and drawing his ſword, bid him beg his life. " No, Doctor," replied the fallen hero, as he lay ſprawling, with the point of his enraged adverſary's ſword at his throat, " *that* I will not do, unleſs you " were giving me phyſic."

This anti-purger was certainly a man of wit, and of ſpirit, and true Engliſh blood, with a good croſs of the bull-dog and the game-cock in his pedigree. He would have ſeen a thouſand patients die, and would have died himſelf a thouſand times, if this had been poſſible, rather than he would have given or taken one purge in the ſecondary fever of the ſmall pox.

Nor do Phyſicians degenerate in this reſpect, or loſe one ſpark of their fire, in the ſofter climate of America. *Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.* Three thouſand miles of ſalt water make no difference on them; and if the Doctors could live, I am convinced their hatred would burn, three thouſand fathoms under water, more certainly than port-fire. If any perſon is curious or diſtruſtful on this point, he may ſoon be ſatisfied by reading only ten or a dozen of their publications on the yellow fever, (ſince 1792), which, in point of violence, and contradiction, and rancour, may vie with any medical books that Europe has produced.

The

The ſame noble and unconquered ſpirit pervades and animates every branch of phyſic.

Some forty or fifty years ago, Dr Battie, a Phyſician accuſtomed to the care of mad patients, publiſhed a book upon madneſs. Scarce was it publiſhed, when Dr Monro (John Monro ſenior, of Bedlam Hoſpital), who ſeems to have been much his ſuperior in wit and talents, fell upon him, and gave him ſuch an unmerciful drubbing, as no mad doctor or mad patient ever gave or ever got before. By the happieſt application that ever was or ever will be made of a line of Horace, *(O. major, tandem parcas inſane minori)*, which he put on the title-page of his book, he contrived to repreſent Battie as madder than his own patients, and his (Monro's) flogging as only an admonition to him to have mercy on thoſe who were leſs mad than himſelf. Such a pamphlet was enough to have made a whole College of Phyſicians mad.

In juſtice to the Men-midwives, and not from any favour, for I really do not like them, I muſt mention, that they too,

> " Plac'd on that Iſthmus of a middle ſtate,
> " And tho' but darkly wiſe, not rudely great,"

have yet ſhewn a becoming ſpirit in this reſpect, and have engaged in keen diſputes. Of theſe I can give no proper account, not being in the ſecret of their ſcience. But I am credibly informed that very lately they were, and perhaps ſtill are, diſputing bitterly about the beſt way of ſcooping out the brains of a child, juſt to facilitate his entry into the world; and every body knows that they have never yet been able to ſettle the proper etiquette of uſhering into the world ordinary people, ſuch as are intended to live in it, who generally have no brains to ſpare. It is very lucky for us all that we were not obliged to wait till that point of ceremonial was ſettled. To have been ſtopped by it, juſt at the

threſhold,

threſhold, would have been truly embarraſſing; if ſuch a demur had laſted but for half a century, it would have made ſad confuſion in the world, and probably would have made the Great Nation a very little one. I heartily wiſh, if the thing be poſſible, that the Men-midwives would have done with their diſputes: they are evidently much more pernicious to the ſtate than thoſe of Phyſicians and Surgeons. It is of little conſequence though we ſhould never agree: there are a thouſand ways of going out of the world.

——————— Facilis deſcenſus Averni,
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis.

There is but one way of coming into the world: and if the Men-midwives perſiſt in telling us every moment, that there are a thouſand lions in that way, and inſiſt upon guarding us all through it armed cap a pie, we ſhall be frightened to obey the firſt commandment; the only commandment which many of us ſeem inclined to obey.

The Knights of the illuſtrious order of the Scalpel, like the Knights Hoſpitallers of Jeruſalem, have always been foremoſt in theſe Holy wars, and have been honourably diſtinguiſhed by the brightneſs and ſharpneſs of their arms, and by the quickneſs, the cleanneſs, and the depth of their cuts. Not being ſo well acquainted with the hiſtory of their atchievements as with thoſe of my own order, I muſt refer to their authentic records. In my time their warfare has never ceaſed. Juſt at the time when I engaged in the ſtudy of Phyſic, two gallant Knights of their order fairly entered the liſts, and engaged in a deſperate ſingle combat, giving and receiving ſuch dreadful cuts and ſlaſhes, that even the judges of the combat, I mean the Reviewers, whoſe duty it certainly was to halloo them on, ſtood aghaſt, and were afraid even to offer any opinion on the merits of the champions, ſagaciouſly obſerving, that "It would be very imprudent for any poor devil of a Re-

"viewer,

" viewer, who wiſhed to ſleep in a whole ſkin, to interpoſe be-
" tween two contending keen Anatomiſts."

In London, the great School of Surgery, the diſputes among Surgeons and Anatomiſts have been carried on with peculiar ſpirit, and they have been numberleſs. I never knew the thouſandth part of them: but have had much amuſement from the little I chanced to hear of them. I remember a violent and obſtinate diſpute about whether a broken leg or thigh ſhould be ſet and laid with the knee ſtraight or bent, which is a point of real importance, and one about which there ſhould have been no diſpute, as it might have been ſettled at once either demonſtrably or by experiment. More lately, I believe within theſe ten years, they were in a blaze about the proper chirurgical treatment of a certain watery ſwelling called the hydrocele; whether by a good clean cut of a ſharp knife, or by a ſmall puncture to let out the water, and then injecting into the ſac a bumper of Port wine.

In the courſe of their diſputes many hard words have paſſed among them. Of theſe I had a noble ſpecimen from one of the moſt eminent of them about a dozen years ago, when I chanced to be in London. When I called on him one morning, he regaled me all the time I was eating my breakfaſt, with a Philippic on his own profeſſional brethren, in which, to my infinite amuſement, he exhauſted every opprobrious term in the Engliſh language, that could be applied to men of the medical or indeed of any profeſſion.

If they are not wickedly belied, ſome things harder than the hardeſt words have now and then paſſed among them. I have heard, that, at one of their meetings, a convivial one, at which I ſhould, *a priori*, have thought it poſſible for them to have agreed in eating and drinking for an hour or two, a gentleman whom I know well, and reſpect highly on account of his ſtrict probity and veracity as well as his talents and learning, mentioned what he had

had frequently obſerved in the brains of mad people whom he had diſſected. " That's a damned lie," ſaid another of the party. " Your head is too hot and muſt be cooled," replied the gentleman who received that unworthy provocation; and taking up a bottle of cold water, poured it on the other's head; diſdaining to avail himſelf of his ſuperior ſtrength againſt an old and feeble adverſary, whom he could have cruſhed as a man would cruſh a beetle.

It is well known that the celebrated John Hunter, who was himſelf abundantly keen in profeſſional diſputes, died ſuddenly in St George's Hoſpital, in conſequence of the irritation he met with in a debate with ſome of his brethren. That debate, I have been aſſured, was conducted in ſuch a ſtyle of aſperity, that a Phyſician who was preſent at the beginning of it, and who had ſeen enough of ſuch debates before, thought fit very ſoon to withdraw.

It was currently ſaid, though undoubtedly as a joke, that the violent irritation which cauſed Mr Hunter's death, was given him purpoſely in order to kill him. It was well known among his profeſſional brethren, that he had a diſeaſe in his breaſt which was very likely to be fatal to him on ſuch an occaſion. But even the currency of that ſcurvy joke implied a great deal with reſpect to the known inveteracy of thoſe profeſſional diſputants.

Scarce was Mr Hunter in his grave, when another of his brethren who had been keenly engaged in diſputes with him, began to write his life, which he ſoon publiſhed. The thought was great and original, and ſhowed ſuperior genius in the author of it. He underſtood and felt that an Anatomiſt is only juſt beginning to his man when any other body would think he had done with him: that is, when he is dead.

Every body knows that the Grave affords no more protection to a man againſt an adventurous Knight of the Scalpel, than a ſhell does to an oyſter.

Perrupit

Perrupit Acheronta Herculeus labor :
Nil mortalibus arduum eſt.

But when the ſpirit of ſuch men is exaſperated by profeſſional quarrels, I doubt whether Heaven or Hell will preſerve their adverſaries from their rage.

Audax omnia perpeti,
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas.
Cælum ipſum petimus ſtultitia.

" He is ſuch a ſcoundrel, that if I ſhould meet him in Heaven, " I would not ſpeak to him," ſaid one of them of his adverſary, with whom he had been long engaged in profeſſional diſputes. That adverſary was his own *brother;* and he was *dead.*

How ſuch men may acquit themſelves, in conſultation, in another world, after a thorough refinement and oxydation in the great reverberatory furnace, the wiſeſt of us cannot preſume to gueſs : it muſt be determined by experiment; the reſult of which none of us probably are very curious to know. But in this world I am ſure I would not truſt one paw of my great Newfoundland dog to a conſultation of thirty or of three hundred of them.

As little would I truſt my dog to a conſultation of all the Surgeons and Apothecaries of a certain country town in England, which muſt be nameleſs, but which moſt of us who have ever been in London have paſſed through. By an accidental but deciſive experiment, it was aſcertained that the repulſive forces, or divellent attractions, or exploſive qualities among them were ſo ſtrong, that no room in the town could hold more than one of them at once. A well-meaning London druggiſt, being in that town in the courſe of his ſummer-ride, to aſk the commands and take the money of his very good friends and cuſtomers,

in pure ſimplicity of heart invited them (ſeparately) to ſup with him at a tavern the ſame night. All promiſed; all came; but one by one. When the ſecond came in, the firſt, without ſaying a word, took up his hat and went away; enter N° 3.; *exit* N° 2.; and ſo on to the very laſt of eight or ten of them. Of courſe, N° 10. and the London druggiſt had ſupper enough. Next morning the druggiſt, meeting one of the deſerters, expreſſed his concern at having loſt the pleaſure of his company the evening before. "What the devil, Sir, do you think I would ſit in compa-" ny with ſuch a ſcoundrel as ———;" and he got the ſame anſwer in ſubſtance from every one of them.

Now for the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh; though laſt not leaſt in the hiſtory of this everlaſting medical warfare.

Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos
Jusque datum ſceleri canimus, populumque potentem
In ſua victrici converſum viſcera dextra:
Cognataſque acies: et rupto fœdere regni
Certatum totis concuſſi viribus orbis
In commune nefas: infeſtiſque obvia ſignis
Signa, pares aquilas, et pila minantia pilis.
Quis furor, O cives? Quæ tanta licentia ferri?
Bella geri placuit nullos habitura triumphos?
Heu quantum potuit terræ pelagique parari
Hoc quem civiles hauſerunt ſanguine dextræ!
Immenſumque aperitur opus, quid in arma furentem
Impulerit populum; quid pacem excuſſerit orbi.

But the genius of Lucan and of Homer united could not do juſtice to ſo vaſt a theme. I will not attempt it, for many good reaſons. I am no judge of their diſputes; I have no right and

and no wiſh to interfere in them; no deſire to be diſſected alive, no ambition to adorn their Hall; though I am well convinced that in their ſkilful hands I ſhould ſoon become a charming Skeleton. But there is no occaſion to give myſelf any trouble, or expoſe my perſon to ſuch fearful riſks; for the work is already done by the hand of a maſter. *Spirat adhuc amor, vivuntque commiſſi calores*, and they will continue to breathe, and glow, and blaze, in flames unquenchable, as long as the Engliſh language ſhall endure. Since the time of Homer, who took the trouble to record the anger of a very angry man, who lived near two hundred years before him, no angry man has had ſuch advantages in that reſpect as the preſent members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. Perhaps their predeceſſors, perhaps all Societies of Surgeons and Phyſicians, have been almoſt as angry as they have been:

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi: ſed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate ſacro:

But till this happy period none even of the angrieſt of our Faculty found an author worthy to record their wrath and hatred. Garth's Diſpenſary was a mere jeſt. But the Surgeons of Edinburgh (*O fortunatos nimium, ſua ſi bona norint*) have found in JONATHAN DAWPLUCKER, Eſq; all that they could wiſh; and a great deal more. If he goes on as he has begun, and as he has promiſed, in three years he will not have left one Feather in the whole Rookery. I ſhall endeavour to preſerve my profeſſional gravity when I ſee them in that piteous ſtate of Deplumation, which it will be ſcarce poſſible to look on in the calm light of mild Philoſophy: but I hope to bear their misfortune with the firmneſs of a Stoic; at leaſt I ſhall not be angry, and I ſhall not interfere.

It is enough (for my purpoſe) that their anger is faithfully recorded in his immortal page: ſo faithfully that it is generally believed that both parties would be very glad to perform on him every operation of ſurgery, in every way that has yet been propoſed, or that can be contrived.

Thoſe ſentiments which he has kindly made immortal, deſerved no doubt, like the Wrath of Achilles and the Loves of the Plants, to be written *Mæonii carminis alite*: But Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; being more ſtudious of truth than of ornament, has very judiciouſly preferred humble proſe; for which I honour him.

He is unqueſtionably a perſon (if not two perſons) of excellent underſtanding, great learning, and moſt correct taſte. Of all theſe qualifications he has given ample proof in a paragraph, or rather I believe a marginal note, in one of his books, relating to me, wherein he beſtows much praiſe (but no more than it deſerved) on a certain Anatomical work of mine, publiſhed about ſeven years ago, in which I had diſſected and anatomized in a new and grand ſtyle the ſoul of Judas Johnſon, Eſq; a vile miſcreant, who had the unparalleled impudence to offer himſelf as a Guide to Students of Phyſic at this Univerſity.

I take Mr Dawplucker's compliments very kindly, and ſhall be glad to be better acquainted with him, whenever he finds it convenient to drop his maſk. In the mean time, I ſhall be happy to ſee ſome more of his maſquerade productions: and if theſe are accompanied (privately) with a key, or notes *variorum*, juſt to explain the alluſions to men, manners, and things, with which ſome of us are but little acquainted, they will be the more acceptable.

Mr Dawplucker's maſk is of ſo new and admirable a kind, and he makes ſuch an exquiſite uſe of it, that it is worth while to explain a little the nature of the contrivance, which with ſhame and ſorrow I muſt confeſs I ſhould never have diſcovered or ſuſpected,

and

and which I was not informed of till within theſe five months, though I had ſeen the paragraph or note about myſelf fifteen months ago.

In his firſt publication, he plucked very ſmartly one eminent Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, who is conſidered as the great leader and the man of the greateſt talents of one party. This of courſe gave great ſatisfaction to the other party.

In his ſecond publication, to the utter aſtoniſhment and confuſion of all concerned, he fell upon one of the moſt eminent Surgeons of the other ſide, and plucked him ſtill more unmercifully. To make this Comedy of Errors more complete, and the perplexity quite inextricable, the perſon pitched upon to be plucked in the ſecond publication was of the ſame name with him who was plucked in the firſt.

The neceſſary conſequence of this was, that when any body ſent for the work of Mr Dawplucker, or opened his book, expecting to ſee his adverſaries very handſomely plucked, he had the agreeable ſurpriſe of finding his beſt friends, or perhaps himſelf, not only plucked barer than ever gooſe was plucked in this world, but well ſalted and peppered, and truſſed and ſpitted, and roaſted ſo admirably, that the mouth of Apicius himſelf would have watered at the deſcription of ſuch a curious dainty diſh.—To prevent any miſtakes, I beg it may be obſerved, that this is metaphorical; and not meant as an invitation to them literally to eat one another: for that is the very laſt thing that I ſhould wiſh them to do. On the contrary, if I thought my advice could have any weight with them, I ſhould take the liberty ſtrongly to caution them all againſt even biting one another, on any account or pretence whatever, eſpecially during their preſent ſtate of exaſperation and acrimony; for I have good reaſon to think, that even the Ormſkirk Medicine and the ſalt water would not prevent the fatal effects of the bite; I mean its effects on the *biter* not on the *bitten*. Of this danger, which

which at preſent perhaps they little dream of, they will ſoon be ſenſible, if they will conſider with due attention the following aphoriſm of Hippocrates:

Καππαδοκην ποτ' ἐχιδνα κακη δακεν· ἀλλα και αὐτη
Καθθανε γευσαμενη αἱματος ἰοβολου.

Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; is at once the JANUS and the Junius of medical warfare: and never may his brazen gates be cloſed: but his works, like the letters of Junius, are too good to be owned. The envy and malice which writings of ſuch ſuperior merit could not fail to bring upon their happy author, if he were preciſely known, would be embarraſſing to a man of his prudence: and the loud and perpetual applauſes which they muſt have brought upon him whenever he appeared in public, would have been ſtill more diſtreſſing to one of his exquiſite modeſty. "His modeſty is a candle to his merit; it ſhines itſelf, and ſhews "his merit alſo." But it is much to be lamented, that his real greatneſs ſhould be leſſened by any ſuch paltry conſiderations. We all muſt acknowledge that the man in the maſk was truly a great man, a very great man: but he who would have done it without a maſk, would have been a much greater man. So thought the moſt honourable the Calves-head Club; and in their grand climax of toaſts on the 30th of January, firſt drank, as in duty bound, "The man in the maſk;" and next, with enthuſiaſm and rapture, "The man who would have done it without a maſk."

The real name of the author of thoſe immortal works which bear the honoured name of Jonathan Dawplucker is of no more conſequence to the world than the real name of Peter Pindar: nor is it wanting to make his works perfectly authentic for my purpoſe, and complete evidence of what I wiſh to prove. I muſt, in the firſt place, premiſe, that for my own part, I neither believe nor diſbelieve

diſbelieve one word contained in his writings, excepting only that paſſage which relates to myſelf: the reaſon of which will ſoon appear.

Suppoſing for the ſake of argument, what I preſume no body will believe, but what, for the credit of the Surgeons, the honour of their profeſſion, and the good of mankind, I heartily wiſh were true, that every thing ſaid by Jonathan Dawplucker of the Surgeons and their diſputes were as falſe as Mahomet's Alcoran, his works would be but ſo much the ſtronger evidence of that implacable rancour and inveterate warfare to which I allude. Such is his ſuperior genius, that his works, even though they were falſe from end to end, would contain complete and true evidence of all that any man in his ſenſes could wiſh to know about the ſubject of them. In this reſpect I do not ſcruple to ſay, that they are of higher authority than the Elements of Euclid, or even the axioms of Geometry. Theſe obtain belief only becauſe they are found to be true: the controverſial works of Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; *muſt* be believed, whether they be true or falſe; and the more falſe they are ſuppoſed to be, the truer and ſtronger is their evidence.

There can be no doubt either about who are the perſons plucked by him, or the new and maſterly ſtyle in which he plucks them; and even the feathers which he has plucked from them ſo unmercifully may eaſily be recogniſed. Thoſe perſons are well known members of the College of Surgeons; thoſe feathers are very proper emblems, or more than emblems, of the ſubjects of their diſputes. If more minute information were required, which I am ſure it ought not to be, we are directed by Mr Dawplucker to thoſe who can give us the moſt particular and authentic. The important queſtion is *not*, Who are right and who are wrong in ſuch profeſſional diſputes? but, What is the nature of their diſputes? and, With what inveterate rancour are they carried on?

None

None of them, I am ſure, can think me ſo great a gooſe as even for a moment to ſuppoſe it poſſible that either party ſhould be in the right in ſuch diſputes. If I were, Jonathan Dawplucker Eſq; ought without delay to perform his office upon me; and he and his other patients would be well entitled to have me roaſted for their next anniverſary dinner.

The truth is, and I wiſh it to be generally known, that far from preſuming to interfere in their diſputes, I do not even know what they are about. Of the many bones of contention which have long kept them embroiled on a gridiron, I know *not one*, unleſs *perhaps* the diſpute about the hydrocele (mentioned, p. 235.) be one of them, which I think I heard about five or ſix years ago that it was; but even that I believe was properly and originally a London diſpute.

I never read one page of Jonathan Dawplucker's works except that paſſage which relates to myſelf, and even that was by a kind of accident. About fifteen months ago a very young member of the College of Surgeons, ſo young that I had never met with him in practice before, and ſo little acquainted with me as not to know my uniform conduct and unalterable reſolution with reſpect to his profeſſional brethren and their diſputes, ſhewed me that paſſage in one of Mr Dawplucker's books. I read it in his preſence very gravely, and returned him the book ſo dryly, that I ſuſpect he was piqued at my behaviour. He certainly in ſhewing it to me had intended what he thought would be moſt civil and gratifying to me. He did not know, what any of his elder brethren could have told him, that I not only would not interfere in their diſputes, which in truth I had no right to do, but did not chooſe even to be informed of them, and had often declined to receive information about them, when it was moſt eagerly offered me.

For that reaſon, and ſome others which it is needleſs to mention, I never would be a member of any of their clubs or ſocieties,

(Eſculapian,

(Eſculapian, Harveian, Gymnaſtic, &c.) I doubt whether I know the names of them all. Though often ſtrongly invited, more than twenty years ago, but ſeldom more lately, as my principle was well known to them, I never was preſent even as a viſitor at any of their clubs. I never heard any of their Harveian orations; not even that one which was an Eulogium on my own Father. I never read any of their controverſial writings. Of courſe I know little or nothing of the particulars of their diſputes, or of who and who are together; probably much leſs than any man in Edinburgh of the medical profeſſion.

I have known theſe four and twenty years that there have always been keen diſputes among them; and that theſe diſputes have of late become more and more inveterate. I have reaſon to believe that ſome of the moſt eminent of them are not at this hour, and have not been for ſome years, on conſulting or ſpeaking terms; and that others of them, who do occaſionally meet and conſult, are very apt to differ irreconcileably in opinion. I have heard that in the conſulting room of this Infirmary there have often been keen debates, which ended juſt as in the Houſes of Lords and Commons, not by either party convincing the other of its error, or giving up its own opinion, but by a *vote;* and ſometimes a very ſmall majority: perhaps of only one or two, when there was a very full houſe. I ſhould not be ſurpriſed to hear of a queſtion being carried only by the Speaker's caſting vote; or of a ſurgeon being required to perform a dangerous operation againſt his own judgment. In ſuch a caſe his ſituation would be truly deplorable; and that of his patient ten times worſe.

That general knowledge, and accidental information of the profeſſional diſputes among the Surgeons, which I acquired whether I would or not, was much more than enough to determine me to take no concern in them: ſo that all the well-merited praiſes that Mr Dawplucker beſtowed on me and my precious Anatomical

work gave me no desire to read any more of his writings. I had heard nothing of them before, or so little as not to attract my attention or be remembered. It was impossible for me to guess at the nature, the peculiar wit, and unparalleled acrimony, of Jonathan Dawplucker, Esq; and his publications. The gentleman who shewed me the passage relating to myself, finding me so dry on the subject, did not take the trouble to explain the joke to me: for which I cannot blame him. I heard very little, and thought less, or nothing, of Mr Dawplucker, till a few months ago, after I had begun to write this Memorial, when one of my own professional brethren (of the College of Physicians) who knew what I was engaged in, and wished well to the good work, mentioned to me Jonathan Dawplucker, Esq; and finding me totally ignorant of his peculiar merits, explained to me the nature of his Janus-like mask, and gave me such an account of his wit and inveteracy, as not only afforded me much amusement, but gave me the strongest desire to read his works. My friend promised to send them to me for my perusal, and actually sent them to my house a few weeks after. Had they come in a day or two I should certainly have read them: but before they came I had time to recollect myself, and take a more prudent resolution:—not to read one word of them till all this Memorial should be printed off.

For this piece of self-denial, which I reckon both wisdom and virtue, I take much credit to myself, and I hope the hostile legions will give me much more, when they know the reason of it. I doubted whether I had wisdom or virtue enough to resist the temptation of catching hints from Mr Dawplucker, or making some allusions to what I might find in his glowing page. Any such use of his works made by me, might very probably have been unjust, and certainly would have appeared personally malevolent, to some individuals, whom I should be very sorry to injure or offend. It would have had the appearance of taking a

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part in their diſputes; which would have been not only fooliſh, but illiberal, and diſgraceful to myſelf. It would have tended ſtrongly to fruſtrate the honeſt benevolent purpoſe of this Memorial.

I ſolemnly declare that I have not read one word of his books, (except the paſſage about myſelf, as formerly mentioned): I do not know one article of the ſubjects of contention in them: I do not know even the title of his books. It is therefore impoſſible for me to make a bad, and very eaſy to make a good uſe of his writings; as I have here endeavoured to do, conſidering them as a fair inſtance of diamond cut diamond, maſk *verſus* maſk, fight dog fight bear, &c. But I alſo declare, that before this Memorial makes its appearance, I ſhall have read, and ſtudied critically, Mr Dawplucker's works, and ſhall be better acquainted with them than I am with the adventures of Don Quixote. For this purpoſe I have deſired my Bookſeller to ſend me a complete ſet of them: and I hope ſoon to be able at a moment's warning to point out a dozen or two of the moſt exquiſite paſſages in his writings, for the gratification of the curious and diſtruſtful. In the mean time, I have given this general account of the nature, the peculiar wit, and the inveterate acrimony of his books, on the authority of ſeveral different perſons who have read them, and on whoſe accuracy, and veracity, and good ſenſe, and good taſte, I can rely.

Not having in me the perfect ſpirit of prophecy, but only that imperfect gloomy kind of it which is common in this country, and well known by the name of the ſecond ſight, I cannot foreſee diſtinctly what my reward will be for all my wiſdom, and virtue, and ſelf-denial, and delicacy towards the angry Knights of the Scalpel; and for all the pains that I have taken to ſhew, that, though they are no better, they are no worſe than others of the medical profeſſion; but I can foretel that my fate will be ſomething much more horrible than the death of Oedipus. Both parties will for once agree in a grand conſultation, and will devote me,

ſoul and body, to the Infernal Gods; I mean the doubly Infernal Gods, whoſe names were never heard on earth, and ſeldom in hell; to whom Pluto and the Furies are *Superi*. Perhaps the formidable Janus-headed Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; notwithſtanding his former kindneſs to me, and all the civil and kind things which I have ſaid of him and his books, will officiate as High Prieſt, and from his two mouths will thunder forth the direful ſentence, and with his own four hands begin the ſacrifice, by plucking me as bare as a fiſh. This I ſhall conſider as a very great honour, and a particular favour: for it will complete the evidence of all that I wiſh to eſtabliſh, and give to the Managers of this Infirmary and to the public a juſt notion of the inveterate rancour of medical hatred.

It happens that I am perſonally acquainted with both the gentlemen whom Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; has plucked ſo cruelly. I know that both of them are men of talents; both of them, for aught that I know to the contrary, may be very good Surgeons; but, in the preſent ſtate of chirurgical warfare in this city, a conſultation of them both (ſuppoſing that one conſulting room could hold them both, which is more than I know) would be too bad for the Devil, if he had got a ſtone in his bladder, and much too bad for any poor patient in this Hoſpital; and a conſultation of twenty ſuch men would be ten times worſe.

A very obvious illuſtration may ſufficiently explain to thoſe who are leaſt acquainted with our medical controverſies, the cruel impropriety, for it is much worſe than a ridiculous abſurdity, to which I allude.

It is certainly proper that every perſon ſhould at all times take care of the welfare of his ſoul, but moſt chiefly when either by the judgment of our Faculty, or by the ſentence of the law, he muſt be regarded as a dying man. For that purpoſe it is fit that he ſhould be aſſiſted by ſome pious, diſcreet, and learned miniſter.

A perſon of a right way of thinking may reaſonably wiſh to have the aſſiſtance of two or three ſuch miniſters; but, I ſhould think, hardly of more. It would, in my opinion, be irrational, as well as needleſs, to aſſemble all the Miniſters even of the eſtabliſhed Church in this City, to give their counſel and profeſſional aſſiſtance on ſuch an occaſion; though there certainly could be no violent diſputes among them, and probably not the ſmalleſt difference of opinion. But if any perſon were to ſend to one, in the calamitous circumſtances which I have ſpecified, all the miniſters and preachers of every ſect that he could collect, of the Eſtabliſhed Church, of the Church of England, Papiſts, Quakers, Anabaptiſts, Methodiſts, Burghers, Antiburghers, and the endleſs hoſt of Sectaries whoſe peculiar tenets no man of ſenſe knows, or will ever enquire into; eſpecially if he ſent to the dying man thoſe of all ſects who were the moſt violent in controverſy, and moſt implacable in their mutual hatred, it would certainly be regarded both as an impious and as a very cruel joke: impious, conſidering the ſubject of it; cruel, conſidering the unhappy ſtate of the perſon on whom it was perpetrated. Surely no man could be thought ſo mad as to do ſuch a thing ſeriouſly, or with any benevolent purpoſe.

If ſuch a thing were done, for whatever purpoſe; or if it were the eſtabliſhed law and practice of this City, juſt like the promiſcuous attendance and conſultations of all the Surgeons of Edinburgh in this Hoſpital, it could do no good. It may eaſily be foreſeen, that if ſo abſurd a ſyſtem were eſtabliſhed, many of the moſt reſpectable clergymen of every perſuaſion would ſoon withdraw from ſuch a painful and unavailing duty; while many of the moſt violent diſputants would be left to contend about the ſoul of the dying man.

Nor muſt it be thought that this account of the violence of medical and chirurgical diſputes is exaggerated. The Managers, if they will take the trouble to enquire, will ſoon be convinced that

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ſome of the Surgeons of Edinburgh, if in conſequence of diſeaſe or accident they needed chirurgical aſſiſtance, and the performing of a capital operation, would think their lives expoſed to tenfold danger, if they were obliged to receive that aſſiſtance from ſome of their own profeſſional brethren; and would be more terrified to become their patients, than the Moderator of the General Aſſembly of the Church of Scotland would be, if he were taken to St Peter's Church on Eaſter day, and were obliged to kneel at the elevation of the Hoſt when the Pope was ſaying High Maſs; or than an old Quaker would be if he found himſelf in the hands of ſix Anabaptiſt preachers, and actually up to his chin in cold running water.

Without the help of ſo many illuſtrations, and all this long and minute detail of our everlaſting medical warfare, any perſon of common ſenſe might ſoon and eaſily have come to that general concluſion which I wiſh to enforce with reſpect to all our conſultations; by conſidering the ſubject in this obvious point of view. If five and twenty Phyſicians or Surgeons be not too many for the purpoſe of a conſultation, would fifty be too many? or an hundred? or five hundred? It will ſurely be admitted that this number could not be a right conſultation; nor yet a good battalion, unleſs it were well drilled, and under ſtrict diſcipline; and that it would be a kind of popular aſſembly; probably a very tumultuous one; perhaps a mob, ſuch as would ſoon require the interpoſition of the Civil Magiſtrate and the Peace-Officers, poſſibly the reading of the riot-act, and the aid of military force to quell it. Theſe things being obvious and undeniable, nothing more can be needed to eſtabliſh the proper general principle, but juſt to trace back the ſeries in the oppoſite order, and obſerve at what number we ought to ſtop. This muſt ſurely be at that number of us in conſultation, which men of the beſt ſenſe and in the moſt affluent circumſtances, who have

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it in their power, and can well afford to get whatever is beſt for themſelves and their families, univerſally think ſufficient and beſt.

But it was of conſequence to ſhow that an unneceſſary number is not only ſuperfluous, but really pernicious; and I truſt I have ſhown that the evils of it depend not entirely or chiefly either on the number of the conſultation, or on the perſonal characters and talents of the individuals who compoſe it. The evils to which I allude, like the wars among independent ſtates, the factions in all free governments, the intrigues in every court, the quarrels in families and among individuals, and even the diſputes in ſome branches of ſcience, depend partly, and perhaps chiefly, on ſome of the moſt general and active principles of human nature; and accordingly have been found to a greater or leſs degree, and are to be feared, in all ages and countries. But it is equally plain that they do not depend entirely on thoſe moſt general principles, but partly on other principles leſs general in their influence, and prevailing more in ſome ſciences and in ſome profeſſions than in others; for thoſe evils, profeſſional diſputes, inveterate animoſity, and open warfare, are common in ſome ſciences and profeſſions, and almoſt unknown in others. They are almoſt unknown among Mathematicians, but very common among Phyſicians, Metaphyſicians, and Politicians. I am ſorry to ſay they have been too common among Theologians; but I muſt do Lawyers the juſtice to own that they are very rare among them. Though diſputing is their trade, of which few of them have enough, and moſt of them little or none, I have obſerved that they diſpute always at the expence of their clients; and even when they diſpute the moſt violently, they continue in good humour, and ſometimes in the moſt intimate friendſhip with one another, and generally unite moſt cordially in laughing at thoſe who employ them. This is ſo well underſtood, that if our lawyers were to engage in ſuch bitter profeſſional diſputes as we

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are always embroiled in, it would be thought as portentous a prodigy as if a pack of fox-hounds, or of leſs rational fox-hunters, were ſuddenly to quit their proper game, and begin to hunt their own ſpecies. The lawyers are much wiſer and better than we are.

Our profeſſional diſputes in every branch of phyſic have been ſo frequent, ſo violent, ſo notorious, that I could eaſily have eſtabliſhed the important general principle which ought to regulate the conduct of the Managers, without alluding even in the moſt diſtant manner to any of the recent or preſent diſputes which have occurred among the Surgeons of Edinburgh; and though it is of ſome conſequence on this occaſion to ſhow that they are no exception to the general rule, I ſhould have avoided mentioning their diſputes, or alluding to them, for fear of incurring the diſgraceful ſuſpicion of taking a part in them; but for the lucky concurrence of two favourable circumſtances, firſt, There being ſuch an admirable author, of unqueſtioned impartiality and profound knowledge of the ſubject, as Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; who can bear witneſs on both ſides; ſecondly, My literally not knowing what their diſputes are about, nor even the account which he gives of them.

The appearance of an author of ſuch diſtinguiſhed talents and merit in medical controverſy is accidental and rare, like that of Hannibal in war, or Junius in politics, or Buonaparte in both. According to the perſonal character and talents of a few individuals who take a lead in medical diſputes, juſt as happens in politics and in war, the contention will be more or leſs violent and entertaining, and more or leſs ably conducted. But contentions, and bitter contentions, there *always muſt be*, wherever there is a great number of Phyſicians and Surgeons, and eſpecially wherever theſe are brought together in the practice of their profeſſion. A numerous conſultation of them *muſt always be a nuiſance*. If all the preſent Members of the College of Surgeons, and Jonathan

nathan Dawplucker, Eſq; along with them, as an agreeable companion, juſt to keep them alive and merry, were in one night tranſported to the planet Saturn, and if their places were inſtantly filled by an equal number of Surgeons, whoſe names we never heard of, and who had never ſeen one another before, there can be no doubt that in a very few years, probably in a few months, theſe new comers would be embroiled in diſputes as keen and as inveterate, though probably not ſo witty and entertaining, as thoſe which live for ever in the works of Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq;

Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis :
Eſt in juvencis, eſt in equis patrum
Virtus, nec imbellem feroces
Progenerant aquilæ columbam.

While ſuch is the virtue of the race, it muſt be the duty of the Managers of this Infirmary to guard the ſick poor in it from the dangers of their promiſcuous attendance and their multitudinous conſultations.

There have been many unforeſeen delays in the writing and in the printing of this Memorial, which I began to write about Chriſtmas laſt, and which has actually been in the preſs ſince the beginning of April. The acquiſition of the Memorial concerning the Surgeons Hoſpital in 1737, which was too precious an article to be diſmiſſed without full diſcuſſion, and which I did not receive till this Memorial was in the preſs ; and the conſideration of the proper plan for the attendance of the Surgeons, which was no part of my original deſign, and of which no part was written till after all the preceding part of this Memorial was printed off, together with

the numberleſs entanglements of my own profeſſion, will, I truſt, ſufficiently account for and excuſe that delay, which the Managers may be aſſured was altogether involuntary on my part, and proceeded from no diminution of my zeal for the ſervice of the Hoſpital. The ſame conſiderations will, I hope, account for and excuſe ſome inaccuracies as to dates and times which will be met with in this paper. As theſe are of no moment either in point of fact or argument, it is not worth while to correct them now.

Thoſe delays have given me time and opportunity to peruſe my Memorial again and again, with a view to diſcover any impropricties which might have eſcaped my obſervation, both in writing it and in reading the proof-ſheets. The only thing which ſtrikes me forcibly in that reſpect, is the having mentioned without any ceremony the names of ſeveral of the Surgeons without their conſent or knowledge. I truſt, however, that this can neither give offence to them, nor be miſunderſtood by others. The facts mentioned with reſpect to them are abundantly well known, and are in themſelves things either quite indifferent, or ſuch as do them honour: for example, what I have mentioned (page 104.) of Mr Bennett and Mr Law. But whether I have judged right or wrong in this reſpect, neither of them can juſtly be blamed for what I have done; for neither of them at this moment know that I have mentioned their names: And I believe they know as little as any of their profeſſional brethren do of this Memorial.

The name which is mentioned in it in the moſt queſtionable manner is that of Mr George Bell, (page 16.). He is mentioned as the attending Surgeon; and he is no longer ſo; nor has he been ſo for near three months. He is one of the youngeſt members of the College of Surgeons, againſt whoſe promiſcuous attendance by rotation I remonſtrate ſo ſtrongly. Some ſerious explanation of this is neceſſary; elſe it might be a cruel wrong to him, and might be underſtood by many perſons to imply that I wiſhed to

point

point him out particularly as an example of what was bad in that ſyſtem, and as the object of public diſapprobation and cenſure. Nothing can be farther from my intentions. Any ſuch inſinuation from me would in the firſt place be a moſt ungrateful return to his father for his very ſkilful profeſſional aſſiſtance moſt zealouſly given to me and my family when we had much need of it; and in the ſecond place, would be great injuſtice to the young man himſelf. He was long my pupil as a ſtudent of phyſic; and I was much better acquainted with him than it is poſſible for me to be with moſt of my pupils, for he was my clerk during a courſe of Clinical lectures. In that capacity I had much reaſon to be ſatisfied with his good ſenſe, his attention to his duty, and his proficiency in phyſic. As to his proficiency in ſurgery, for the reaſons fully mentioned already, I cannot judge of it; but as he has made that his chief object, and has had very uncommon advantages in the ſtudy of it, I muſt preſume, till I have evidence to the contrary, that he is well inſtructed in his own profeſſion. Far from wiſhing to injure him, I ſhould be very glad to do him every good office in my power on any proper occaſion; but this is not ſuch an occaſion. However great his merits may be ſuppoſed, I am ſure the loſs of him, and of an hundred others as well qualified as he is, may be eaſily and well ſupplied to the ſick poor in the Hoſpital by the attendance of two or three ordinary Surgeons permanently appointed; and I am equally ſure that the evils reſulting from the promiſcuous attendance and conſultations of all the Surgeons in Edinburgh by rotation cannot be compenſated to the ſick poor, by all the merits of an hundred as good as he is, or better, attending only in their turn with the reſt of their profeſſional brethren. I ſhall truſt therefore that both the Father and Son have good ſenſe and knowledge enough of their profeſſion to perceive, that the general principles on which I have proceeded in this diſcuſſion admit of no exception in favour of any individual whatever. Jonathan

Dawplucker, Eſq; need not frown, with either of his faces, on me, for thus expreſſing my good will to Mr George Bell and his father; for it is to be underſtood always with a *ſalvo jure* to him. He may be aſſured that I ſhall never ſide with either of them in any of their profeſſional diſputes; and that he has my hearty conſent to pluck them both, in his beſt manner, twice a-year, as long as they live, or oftener if he chooſes. I like the ſport as well as he can do; and at preſent, that is, till ſuch time as the attendance of the Surgeons in the Royal Infirmary be put on a proper footing, it may do good, and can do no harm.

At the end of this long Paper, more than twice as long as I intended, it will perhaps appear almoſt a burleſque to offer any apology for not making it longer. But, in truth, many things have been omitted in it, which thoſe who are already acquainted with the ſubject, and eſpecially the Surgeons themſelves, muſt think I ought to have ſtated in ſuch a Memorial. As the ſame ſubject was keenly agitated more than thirty years ago, that is, after thirty years experience of the bad effects of that pernicious ſyſtem of their promiſcuous attendance by rotation, againſt which I now remonſtrate; and as the ſame ſubject was again under conſideration eight years ago, in conſequence of Dr Duncan's ſuggeſtion; it is plain that ſome of the Surgeons muſt have ſome reaſons which they think valid for wiſhing the preſent ſyſtem to continue. It will naturally be ſuppoſed that many particular facts and circumſtances of real importance in deciding the queſtion, eſpecially ſuch as involve the intereſt of their College in its corporate capacity, or of its ſeveral members individually, may be well known to them, and that ſuch things muſt have been already ſtated and urged with effect in the former diſcuſſions of this controverſy.

It certainly would have been incumbent on me as a man of candour, profeſſing, and in truth moſt anxiouſly wiſhing, to act openly and uprightly in the conduct of this buſineſs, to have ſtated fairly every

every ſuch fact, or circumſtance, or reaſon, or argument, and either to have allowed it its full weight, or given my own reaſons for diſregarding it.

But I ſolemnly declare, that, after the moſt diligent enquiry, I have not been able to diſcover or hear of any thing of that kind. I formerly mentioned very ſtrongly, and I now repeat, that I neither know nor can conceive any argument in favour of the preſent ſyſtem that can be ſuppoſed to have the ſmalleſt weight, except either that it is good (or at leaſt not bad) for the patients; or elſe, that though bad for the patients, it is the right of the Surgeons, long ſince bought and paid for, which right they will maintain, and endeavour to enforce by law. Both theſe arguments I have conſidered fully, and have given my reaſons for diſregarding them both.

As to the great conteſt thirty years ago, I can moſt completely account for my not giving any review of it. That volume of our minutes which contains the hiſtory of it, has been miſſing for ſeveral years, as I learned after I had given both our Clerk and our Treaſurer a great deal of needleſs trouble in ſeeking for it. I ſhall be very glad, and I think it not impoſſible, that this public mention of it may prove the means of recovering the miſſing volume. It probably is in the poſſeſſion of ſome perſon, or of the executors of ſome perſon, who has formerly been a Manager of this Hoſpital. I had no acceſs to the Minutes of the Royal College of Surgeons, nor could I, without the groſſeſt impropriety, have applied for ſuch information as I wanted on this occaſion, to the worthy Preſident of that College. It would have been like aſking him to be of counſel with me againſt that ſociety over which he preſides. I truſt I need not aſſure him, that this conſideration alone, of the reſpect and delicacy due to his official character in the College of Surgeons, and no change in thoſe ſentiments of eſteem and friendſhip which I have long entertained, and ever muſt entertain

tertain for him, has prevented me from ſubmitting to his reviſion every page of this Memorial, even before it went to the preſs. To this confidence on my part he would have been well entitled by his friendſhip to me, as well as by his long and meritorious ſervices in the Infirmary, firſt as a Surgeon, and afterwards as a Manager. But as Preſident of the Royal College of Surgeons, he will not ſee one word of it till after it ſhall have been diſtributed among the Managers of the Royal Infirmary.

As to Dr Duncan's propoſal in 1792, I have not to this hour been able to learn any more about it but his own printed paper, which contains only his propoſal, but no explanation of the nature and greatneſs of the evil which he wiſhed to remove. I ſuſpect that Dr Duncan, with that peculiar good nature and candour for which he is ſo honourably diſtinguiſhed, had taken it for granted, that as the evil was well known to all who were moſt concerned in it, eſpecially to the Surgeons and the Managers of the Infirmary, any full expoſition of it was unneceſſary, and that all of them would cheerfully concur in any meaſure that tended to leſſen ſuch a notorious evil. In both reſpects it appears that he was miſtaken; and I have done my beſt endeavours to profit by his error, and to ſupply the defects of his ſhort paper. I muſt take the liberty to ſay, that I do not think his propoſal was by any means an adequate remedy for the great evil which he wiſhed to remove; but whether he was right or wrong in thoſe opinions, I am ſure I have not heard of any one argument againſt his propoſal but that one, too ludicrous and contemptible to deſerve a ſerious diſcuſſion, that the Surgeons would make a terrible noiſe about it.

As to the numberleſs facts and circumſtances which muſt have occurred in the courſe of more than ſixty years experience of the promiſcuous attendance of all the Surgeons in Edinburgh in rotation, I can only ſay that I have never yet heard of one which I can conſider as in favour of that ſyſtem; and that I have heard

of

of many that I ſhould conſider as ſtrong additional arguments againſt it. But ſuch particular facts are not wanted for my preſent purpoſe: and in one reſpect they would be almoſt inconſiſtent with it. I wiſh the queſtion to be diſcuſſed, as I am ſure ultimately it muſt be decided, on the fair general principles which I have ſtated; principles immoveably fixed in human nature, and in the nature of the medical profeſſion: thoſe principles on which it ought to be decided if the ſame general queſtion were agitated in any other great city, or if it ſhould be agitated in this city an hundred years hence, and on which at this time it would be decided if not one of the preſent members of the College of Surgeons in Edinburgh had ever been born. When it is diſcuſſed on ſuch principles, it appears to me impoſſible that any the ſmalleſt wrong can be done to that College, or to any individual member of it.

It is poſſible, however, that ſome particular facts or circumſtances, unknown to me, or heard of only as vague reports, to which I could pay no regard, may be well known to the Surgeons, and may by them be thought of ſuch importance in behalf of the preſent ſyſtem, that I ought to have ſtated them and given them their full weight in this Paper. I am ſenſible that any wilful ſuppreſſion of ſuch facts or circumſtances on my part, would be juſt as bad as the fabrication of falſehoods to ſerve my purpoſe.

Therefore, to preclude at once all ſuch ſurmiſes, I hereby publicly make them this offer, which they muſt all acknowledge to be fair.

If any *facts* or *circumſtances* known to them have been *omitted* in this Memorial, which they think ſhould have been *ſtated* in it, as involving the honour and intereſt, either of their College in general or of any individual member of it, and which on mature deliberation they wiſh to have as publicly known as this Paper will be, let them give me *authentic information* of thoſe things; and I engage,

gage, without delay, to print them, in their own words, in an additional Memorial, which ſhall be diſtributed in the ſame manner as this; and either to admit them to be valid, or to give my reaſons for diſregarding them.

They will not, I preſume, underſtand by this offer, that I undertake or wiſh to argue their caſe for them. I have the humility to believe that they would rather truſt it to a conſultation of the five and twenty youngeſt Lawyers at the Bar, or to all of them in rotation; rather to Jonathan Dawplucker himſelf; perhaps rather to the Devil, than to me. But I wiſh them fully to know that there is no wilful ſuppreſſion, on my part, of any fact or circumſtance favourable to them, and unfavourable to my cauſe; and that I ſhould conſider any ſuch diſingenuous conduct, as both diſgraceful to myſelf, and inconſiſtent with the honeſt and benevolent purpoſe of this Memorial.

JAMES GREGORY.

ST ANDREW'S SQUARE,
16th July 1800.

Printed by MURRAY & COCHRANE,
Craig's Cloſe, Edinburgh.

ADDITIONAL MEMORIAL

TO THE

MANAGERS

OF THE

ROYAL INFIRMARY.

BY

JAMES GREGORY, M. D.

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE OF PHYSIC IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, AND FIRST PHYSICIAN TO HIS MAJESTY IN SCOTLAND.

Immensum reseramus opus; gens nescia veri
Ut residem longaque animum caligine mersum
Attollat cœlo. ———

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY MURRAY & COCHRANE, CRAIG'S CLOSE.

M, DCCC, III.

To Robert Hamilton Esq.r
Advocate

From The Author.

PREFACE.

NINE hundred ſuns have now gone down, without animadverſion from me, on certain publications to which my former Memorial gave occaſion; though ſome of them, eſpecially one entitled an Anſwer to my Memorial, written by Mr John Bell, at the requeſt of ſome of his profeſſional brethren, and afterwards adopted and ſanctioned by a ſolemn vote of thanks by the Royal College of Surgeons, muſt have generally been thought to require, on my part, not only a Reply, but the moſt complete and pointed refutation.

Appearances, I own, are much againſt me; yet I truſt I ſhall be able to convince every perſon who is intereſted in this diſcuſſion, and moſt chiefly the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, that I had never doubted of the neceſſity of replying to that publication, nor ever been guilty of any wilful delay in doing ſo.

From the firſt ſentence of the following Memorial it will appear, that it was not only written, but printed in ſuch time, that I expected it would have been publiſhed early in ſpring 1801: and an attentive reader will eaſily perceive, from the tenor of the firſt 130 pages of it, and eſpecially from many alluſions, and *dates*, and calculations founded on theſe, incongruous with the preſent time, that thoſe pages were printed in the courſe of the winter

1800 and 1801. But I found myſelf obliged very ſoon to alter my plan, in conſequence of the Royal College of Surgeons having engaged in a lawſuit with the Managers of the Infirmary, on the ſubject which I had diſcuſſed in my former Memorial: for I deemed it at leaſt indecent, if not ſomething worſe, to bring before the tribunal of the public, matters which were actually under the cognizance of the ſupreme Court of Juſtice in this country. Afterwards I found it expedient to delay, from time to time, the completion of the new plan which I had propoſed to myſelf; in conſequence of that maſs of lawſuits, which grew rapidly out of the firſt, or out of one another; and occaſionally brought to light many curious particulars, truly edifying in themſelves, and likely to conduce very much to my original benevolent purpoſe. On this account, the writing and printing of the following Memorial went on ſlowly, and at irregular times, for near two years. When at laſt I had the agreeable ſurpriſe of hearing that all thoſe lawſuits, which I thought might well have laſted two centuries, had been——not decided,——but quietly given up, after little more than two years of very ſpirited litigation, I found much remained to be done, indeed that the moſt important point of diſcuſſion remained untouched, to complete the plan of my Additional Memorial. In truth, the laſt 140 pages of it have been written ſince the beginning of February laſt. Theſe peculiarities, of its having been written at different times, and its having actually been in the preſs for two years and a half, will ſufficiently account for the many glaring anachroniſms that will be found in it: but as theſe do not affect the ſenſe, or mar the argument in any reſpect, it is unneceſſary to point them out particularly, or to endeavour to correct them as errors.

The general tenor of that Anſwer to my former Memorial, and the ſingularly auſpicious and wonderful omens under which it came forth, equally precluded all thoughts of allowing it to paſs unnoticed,

unnoticed, and without the moſt pointed reply. Without preſuming in the leaſt to call in queſtion the extraordinary merit of all the other writings of the ſame author, eſpecially of his controverſial writings, which I believe they all are to a greater or leſs degree, I do not ſcruple to ſay, that his Anſwer to my Memorial is his maſterpiece. I doubt even whether there be in the long annals of medical controverſy any thing *ſimile aut ſecundum*. It may fairly be regarded as a kind of caricatura, or extreme caſe, fit to ſhow in the ſtrongeſt light the genuine ſpirit of a medical diſputant. The ingenious author of it, in compoſing his immortal work, had ſome great advantages, ſuch as no medical diſputant ever had before, and ſuch as he himſelf probably will never have again. He appears in it, *not* as expreſſing his own ſentiments, but as a ſpirited and eloquent advocate in behalf of others; to gratify whoſe paſſions, or to promote whoſe intereſt, he has ſtrongly expreſſed ſentiments, not only with reſpect to me, but with reſpect to many other perſons, and many things, diametrically oppoſite to thoſe ſentiments which he uſed to expreſs moſt freely, and which were generally underſtood to be his own genuine thoughts. In the ſame good cauſe, he has, with equal boldneſs, aſſerted many things, new and wonderful, which he could have no reaſon to believe; many of which he muſt have known to be falſe; and ſome of which he, and all his clients, muſt have known to be impoſſible. Yet no perſon can be ſo irrational and uncandid as to think him, in any degree, anſwerable for the juſtneſs of thoſe ſentiments, or the truth of thoſe aſſertions, which he has expreſſed ſo ſtrongly. I dare ſay he would laugh in the face of any perſon, who ſhould underſtand ſo little of the joke, as to aſk of him to prove what he has aſſerted. As little, or leſs if poſſible, can any individual of his clients be required to prove thoſe aſſertions: for they are not the aſſertions, or avowed ſentiments, of any one of them individually, but only the ſentiments and aſſertions of a party, which employed one of their own number, with whoſe

character

character they were well acquainted, and whoſe high controverſial talents they very juſtly eſteemed, to plead their cauſe at the bar of the public. Never was a ſet of clients more fortunate in their lawyer, or a lawyer in a ſet of clients.

Poeta quum primum animum ad ſcribendum adpulit,
Id ſibi negoti credidit ſolum dari,
Populo ut placerent, quas feciſſet fabulas;

and that his fables pleaſed them perfectly, is amply teſtified by their vote of thanks.

Independently of all other conſiderations, the Philippic in queſtion would have been acceptable, and highly valuable, to me, as ſhowing indiſputably, how far a medical author can go in controverſy, with reſpect to the *facts* which he aſſumes and aſſerts, the inferences which he pretends to deduce from them, and the inveterate rancour with which he reviles his opponent: for I had had the mortification to learn, that many perſons had diſtruſted, and regarded as at leaſt exaggerations if not fictions of mine, the examples which in my former Memorial I had given of our everlaſting medical warfare: but now I have the pleaſure of diſcuſſing a genuine and very recent ſample of that noble ſpirit, which far ſurpaſſes, not only my former experience of ſuch things, but the utmoſt effort of my imagination.

In another reſpect, it was ſtill more valuable to me, and ineſtimable to the public: it ſhowed irreſiſtibly, and much better than I could have done, to the Managers of the Infirmary, and to the public, the urgent neceſſity of ſome ſelection among the Surgeons for the Hoſpital-duty, as I had recommended; and it even gave aſſiſtance in that ſelection, which I could not have done, by marking ſome of thoſe who ought moſt certainly to be excluded.

It

It would be arrant Quixotiſm to expect, that any remarks which I can offer on that publication ſhould make medical diſputants either wiſer or better; more correct as to their facts; more cautious in their aſſertions; more accurate in their reaſonings; more candid in their diſputes, or leſs virulent in their wrath. But perhaps even medical diſputants will learn, from ſo ſtriking an example, that the theory and practice of medical controverſy, however ſkilfully employed, will not avail in queſtions of plain expediency, of moral duty, and of common ſenſe. When, on theſe ſubjects, the ableſt diſputant aſſumes and aſſerts facts which exiſt only in his own imagination; well if there; when, from his aſſumed facts, he draws concluſions contrary to the beſt-eſtabliſhed principles of logic and the common ſenſe of mankind, overlooking other inferences the moſt obvious and indiſputable from the ſame facts, which are fatal to his own cauſe; he will ſoon feel, to his ſorrow, that there are teſts of truth, and modes of reaſoning, of which he never dreamed, and which he will find it in vain to diſpute.

And when ſuch a diſputant, on ſubjects level to the common underſtanding of mankind, endeavours to eke out his ſcanty facts, and to ſtrengthen his feeble reaſoning, by perſonal invective againſt his opponent, he will diſcover, ſooner or later, that in other games, as well as at cheſs, the bad play of one is the good luck of another; and the only good luck which he can expect to meet with.

To give ſome notion of the purpoſe of the following Memorial, and of the principal ſubjects diſcuſſed in it, it is neceſſary to mention the following particulars.

Very ſoon after my former Memorial was diſtributed, I learned that there was ſome ſurmiſe of its being ſomehow unfavourable or uncandid to certain living members of the Royal College of Surgeons. The ſurmiſe was groundleſs; but not on that account to be diſregarded. I was therefore at much pains to put an end to all ſuch ſurmiſes, for which a moſt favourable opportunity offered

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at that very time, in the courſe of ſome correſpondence which Mr John Bell had begun with me, and in which he declared his genuine ſentiments, and his own reſolution, not to be concerned in any diſpute with the Managers of the Infirmary, but to leave the buſineſs of arranging the chirurgical department of the Hoſpital entirely to their deciſion.

To Mr John Bell, therefore, I addreſſed a long letter, containing the moſt complete and explicit diſavowal of all ſuch intentions on my part, and the moſt ample proof that no ſuch thing was in fact contained in my Memorial. Theſe things I begged of him to explain to his profeſſional brethren; over whom, at leaſt over one great party of whom, I underſtood he had much influence. Afterwards, when I learned that he had changed his mind, and was not only to engage in the diſpute with the Managers, but even to appear as the avenger and advocate of his profeſſional brethren before the public, I begged of him to communicate to them the whole of that letter of mine. When his admirable Anſwer appeared, with much aſtoniſhment and equal edification, I obſerved, that not one word was ſaid in it of our correſpondence, or of my complete vindication of myſelf from that unworthy conduct, which was ſtrongly imputed to me in the letter of his clients prefixed to his pamphlet; in which letter they requeſted his aid to undo and avenge the pretended wrong that I had done them. That ſtrange omiſſion in his very eloquent pleading I have taken care to ſupply, by printing the whole of our correſpondence on that ſubject, (page 34. to 78. of this Memorial).

On pretence of vindicating his profeſſional brethren from that pretended wrong which they were pleaſed to fancy I had done them, he has taken occaſion to revile me in a new and very maſterly ſtyle; unparalleled, I believe, in all the voluminous annals of medical warfare. Ignorance, falſehood, arrogance, malevolence, hypocriſy, of courſe made a part of the character which he has given me: but

all

all this or more might have been done by other authors. His ſuperior genius is diſplayed in diſcovering new topics of invective, and in the manner in which he has availed himſelf of them: my ſtature, my countenance, my dreſs, my writing Latin, my having carried arms as a volunteer, the amiable character of my father, my family-hiſtory for ſome generations, the number of my anceſtors who have been Profeſſors, all, all, are made ſubjects of reproach to me. From the account that he has had the goodneſs to give of myſelf, both body and mind, it is evident that I muſt be one of the moſt formidable monſters that ever appeared in the world. That I ſhould be entitled to take precedence of the Iriſh giant, is abundantly plain; but I think, without much vanity, I might be a better ſpeculation for a ſhowman than any rhinoceros or royal tyger that ever yet was exhibited.

This great liberality on his part I take very kindly of him: for I ſhould have been ſadly mortified to have been repreſented as one of thoſe pitiful little villains, whoſe peccadillos might be expiated by tranſportation for fourteen years, or even for life, to Botany Bay.

But ſuch a monſter as he deſcribes me would never be received, or permitted to live, in that flouriſhing colony; leſt he ſhould diſturb the peace and corrupt the morals of its happy and virtuous inhabitants. A few remarks, which ſeemed peculiarly wanted for the better underſtanding and properly reliſhing that part of his Philippic, will be found between the 103d and the 109th of the following pages.

By a wonderfully happy thought, the more meritorious that it ſeems to be perfectly original and new, he has contrived to give myſelf as the avowed author of one of the moſt extravagant and abſurd fictions, which he has ſo freely and dexterouſly employed, in order to make me contemptible and infamous. The fiction itſelf is ſo abſurd, that no perſon of competent underſtanding and knowledge ever could believe it; but he has ſo preciſely and ſtrong-

ly aſſerted that I am the author of it, implying a plentiful lack both of truth and ſenſe in me, that I am convinced many of his readers muſt have believed at leaſt that part of his aſſertion. I have therefore thought it worth while to beſtow a few pages (from 169. to 180.) of this Memorial, to do juſtice to ſo noble a ſpecimen of controverſial eloquence and candour.

I have alſo beſtowed a few pages (121. to 141.) of this Memorial, to illuſtrate the full merit in point of fact, and the great rhetorical genius diſplayed, in his noble Philippic on my ignorance of ſurgery: an ignorance which he is pleaſed to ſay is criminal. To that ignorance, and to my applying to his profeſſion the rules and canons of my own, and ſuppoſing ſurgery, like phyſic, an uncertain and ſpeculative ſcience, he imputes almoſt all that I had urged in my former Memorial; taking care to forget that the ſtrong conſiderations and arguments therein contained are founded on thoſe very facts and undeniable principles moſt ſtrongly aſſerted by his worthy predeceſſor Deacon Kennedy, and *his* accomplices; on the faith of which their deteſtable bargain with the Managers of the Infirmary was made in 1738; and taking care of courſe not to ſee, or give his readers an opportunity to ſee, that in reviling me for my criminal ignorance of ſurgery diſplayed in my former Memorial, he was giving the lie direct to all that Deacon Kennedy and his friends had ſaid in theirs; juſt as much as he did in his own new and ſplendid diſcovery, (promulgated in his Anſwer to me), that a Surgeon cannot, like a Phyſician, improve by practice, but muſt be *perfect in operations before he preſume to touch the knife.*

In ſo great a rhetorical work as Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, the good old praiſe-worthy expedient of miſquoting my words, and miſrepreſenting my meaning, of courſe, was not neglected. One ſplendid example of this kind, which I have diſcuſſed (page 145.), ſeems to have been intended, and at leaſt it is employed, to give him an opportunity of reviling me bitterly for an offer which

I had made, the moſt liberal and candid that could be deſired or conceived. Some others of thoſe miſquotations, particularly one diſcuſſed (page 180.) and one conſidered (page 306.) and one conſidered (page 307.) ſeem to be intended for no other purpoſe, but juſt to ſhow how completely he can miſquote my words and miſrepreſent my meaning: but they are not on this account the leſs meritorious. The firſt of the three (page 180.) is ſo admirable, that it amounts to repreſenting me as having aſſerted a moſt notorious falſehood, injurious to my preceptors and colleagues in this Univerſity, and diſgraceful to the Univerſity itſelf: but withal diametrically oppoſite to the well known and honourable truth which I had expreſſed in the plaineſt terms: which terms he certainly knew, for he has uſed ſome of them; and he *could not* have miſunderſtood my meaning.

On pretence of vindicating the memory of the late Dr Cullen from a pretended wrong that I had done to it, Mr John Bell has contrived to pay his compliments in a new and wonderful manner, not only to Dr Cullen perſonally, but to all the Profeſſors of Phyſic in this Univerſity; whoſe conduct in the examining of ſtudents, with a view to promote them to the degree of Doctor of Phyſic, he repreſents as the moſt abſurd, illiberal, and diſgraceful, that can be conceived: ſo bad indeed, that, if his account of it were believed, it would be almoſt infamous to obtain the Diploma of Doctor of Phyſic from the Univerſity of Edinburgh: nay it would have been ſo in the time of Dr Cullen, whom he repreſents as the author of that abominable but unheard-of mode of proceeding. That wonderful effort of rhetoric, which could at once vindicate Dr Cullen from *no wrong* and *no blame*, and completely traduce him and all his colleagues, I have diſcuſſed at full length (page 182. to 198.) in this Memorial.

Through the whole of his Anſwer to me, Mr John Bell has taken occaſion to trumpet forth the praiſes of his profeſſional brethren,

both in point of humanity, and in point of great and uniform ſkill and knowledge of ſurgery. Both of theſe topics one ſhould have thought, *a priori*, that it muſt have exceeded all power of the human face, even to have attempted. With reſpect to the firſt of them, their great humanity, and tender regard for the ſafety and welfare of their patients: the bargain which their predeceſſors made with the Managers of the Infirmary in 1738; the hateful means by which that bargain was forced upon the Managers; the wonderful publication of Deacon Kennedy and his friends, analyſed in my former Memorial; the violent conteſt of the Surgeons with the Managers near thirty years after, when the latter, convinced by ſad experience of the greatneſs of the evil which had been done, endeavoured, but in vain, to undo it; the conduct of the College of Surgeons only eight years before my Memorial appeared, when Dr Duncan made another fruitleſs attempt to get that ſad evil rectified; any one of theſe things might well have precluded all thoughts of praiſing the College of Surgeons on account of their zeal for the good of their hoſpital-patients: but as all of them put together have not had this effect, I have produced (page 142. of this Memorial) one little additional document, which *muſt be deciſive:* a unanimous reſolution of that Society, ſo lately as the year 1784, which I have good reaſon to believe ſtill remains on their records, that they would *not give the Managers an opportunity of adopting meaſures, which, however advantageous they might be to the Hoſpital, would be attended with eſſential prejudice to the intereſt of the Royal College.*

The other point, that of the great and uniform ſkill, and univerſally amiable and reſpectable character, of every member of their College, was at leaſt equally wonderful and edifying. Their profeſſional and perſonal diſputes, the inveteracy with which theſe were carried on, their implacable warfare, the ſingularly groſs and outrageous terms in which ſome of them had reviled their brethren,

thren, were notorious beyond all poſſibility of diſpute or palliation. Some of the monuments of theſe things were in print. One of them, too bad as I thought to be quoted in my former Memorial, I have taken care to print verbatim in this, (page 213. to 227.), illuſtrated with a very ample commentary, and a brief chronological view of their profeſſional warfare, which occupies full 70 pages, (from 227. to 296.). This I have thought it neceſſary to do, not only for the amuſement of the idle, and gratification of the curious, but for the vindication of my own veracity, which was ſo ſtrongly brought into queſtion.

For the ſame good purpoſe, I have been at ſome pains to ſhow, (page 269. to 283.), what a malignant influence their perſonal, profeſſional, and corporation diſputes, had on their conſultations and practice even in the Royal Infirmary. I had the pleaſure of obſerving, that the ſpirit of controverſy was ſo reſtleſs, and the habit of it ſo inveterate, that their very ingenious and eloquent advocate, when he was pleading their cauſe at the bar of the public, and maintaining moſt ſtrongly the perfection of their art, the certainty of their ſcience, and the uniform ſkill of all his profeſſional brethren, could not refrain from a profeſſional diſpute himſelf, with reſpect to one of the commoneſt operations in ſurgery; on which he choſe to differ from moſt of his brethren, and to treat their opinion, and practice, and even the inſtrument which they uſually employed, with the moſt ſovereign contempt. (276. to 280.).

Yet great as his merit has been in all theſe reſpects, it bears no ſenſible proportion to the aſtoniſhing powers of rhetorical genius, which he has diſplayed on two other ſubjects; both of which are deeply intereſting to the Managers and to the public. I have therefore diſcuſſed them both at full length in this Memorial.

The firſt of them relates to a very ſerious evil, which had often occurred in the Surgeons wards, and which I always underſtood

to

to have proceeded ultimately from the very improper mode of chirurgical attendance in them. From conſiderations of delicacy, which I am now convinced were not only needleſs, but injudicious, in my former Memorial, I avoided any minute deſcription, or even particular mention, of the evil in queſtion; contenting myſelf with alluding to it in the moſt delicate and cautious terms. I knew that my alluſion, general as it was, could not fail to be underſtood by every Surgeon, and almoſt by every ſtudent who had attended in the ſurgeons wards; and conſequently that it could eaſily be explained to any of the Managers who were not already acquainted with the ſubject to which it related. I knew that it was too great and notorious an evil to be either denied or explained away; and I did not wiſh to ſhock the public by any particular or unneceſſary knowledge of it. My object was to get it and many other evils reformed; not to make the Surgeons odious, or the Hoſpital itſelf horrible to the public.

Mr John Bell has thought and acted very differently. Far from imitating my reſerve and delicacy on that tender point, he has gone completely to the oppoſite extreme; has deſcribed the evil minutely, painted it in the blackeſt colours, and proclaimed it in all its horrors. For what purpoſe? it may be aſked. For no other that I can conceive, but what he has explained in one ſhort ſentence of his Philippic; namely, to transfer the blame of it from the Surgeons to the Phyſicians, or perhaps to the general conduct of the Infirmary, implying the moſt atrocious negligence on the part of the Managers. This point is diſcuſſed from 324. to 371. of the following pages.

The ſecond of thoſe ſubjects which he has treated in ſo maſterly a ſtyle, is the inſtitution of Clinical Lectures, read by ſome of the Profeſſors of Phyſic on the caſes of the patients entruſted to their care; for whoſe accommodation they are allowed by the Managers

two

two ſmall wards, ſeparate from the great wards of the Hoſpital under the care of the ordinary Phyſicians.

This inſtitution of Clinical Lectures has now ſubſiſted more than half a century; has been generally and highly approved of; has been imitated in many other places; as well it might be, for it is difficult to conceive any thing more innocent at leaſt, if not more laudable, in the management of the ſick poor received into an Hoſpital. Nay, Mr John Bell himſelf does not ſay otherwiſe; but beſtows the moſt extravagant praiſes on the Managers for permitting, and on the Profeſſors of Phyſic for reading thoſe lectures, and conducting the practice to which they relate: but at the ſame time gives ſuch an account of the nature and purpoſe of Clinical Lectures, and of the manner in which they are conducted, as muſt make the Profeſſors who conduct them, the Managers who permit them, and the Hoſpital itſelf, objects of indignation and horror to the public; at leaſt to all who believe what he has ſo confidently aſſerted. Long before his Anſwer to me came forth, I had the pleaſure of hearing much of the account that he was to give of the Clinical Lectures, which I underſtood was the part of his work on which he chiefly valued himſelf. My expectations of courſe were very high; but they have not been diſappointed.

That moſt ſplendid part of his Philippic I have diſcuſſed, as in duty bound, at full length, (page 372. to 512.) of the following Memorial.

A work of ſuch a new and marvellous kind, as Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, could not fail to be received with much aſtoniſhment, and ſome incredulity, by the profane and ignorant vulgar, who knew nothing of the ſpirit and inveteracy of medical warfare. Whether this incredulity was foreſeen, or only learned by experience, after the work in queſtion was publiſhed, and had become a ſubject of general converſation, I really do not know.

There

There was ſome ſecret hiſtory about it, which I never could get at the bottom of. But I know well, from many queſtions put to myſelf, ſoon after it was publiſhed, that it did excite both amazement and incredulity in a very high degree: and I take it for granted, that the author of it, and his clients, muſt have known much more of that than ever I did. At any rate, it is certain, that, in *leſs than a month* after it was publiſhed, Mr John Bell had the honour to receive the public and ſolemn thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons, for his Anſwer to me. If there had been any doubt, which I preſume there was not, of the intent and purpoſe of that vote of thanks, the uſe that was almoſt immediately made of it would have removed all doubt, and explained it completely. The vote of thanks was publiſhed in the Newſpapers, and actually made, repeatedly, a part of the advertiſement recommending the work to the attention and favour of the public.

Having preſerved a copy of that moſt precious and original advertiſement, I reprint it here verbatim, for the gratification of the curious.

" Juſt publiſhed, by Peter Hill, Edinburgh, and Cadell & Da-
" vies, and Longman & Rees, London; and to be had of Braſh &
" Reid, Glaſgow, and J. Burnett, Aberdeen, in one volume Roy-
" al octavo, price Four Shillings and Sixpence,

" ANSWER for the Junior Members of the Royal College of
" Surgeons of Edinburgh, to the MEMORIAL of Dr JAMES
" GREGORY, Profeſſor of the Practice of Phyſic, &c. &c. by JOHN
" BELL, Surgeon.

" This Memorial, dangerous to the character of the younger
" part of the profeſſion, and ruinous, in the opinion of many, to
" an Inſtitution which has long flouriſhed under the care of the
" Royal College of Surgeons, was compoſed with great ability,

" and

" and diſtributed with an unſparing hand, and with no ſmall ex-
" pence.

" It is from more reſpectable motives than the private gratifi-
" cation he might feel, that the Author of the Reply chuſes, at
" this time, to ſtrengthen his claims on the attention of the public ×
" and of his Profeſſion, by announcing the approbation of the Royal
" College of Surgeons.

" SIR,

" At the deſire, and in the name of the Royal College of Surgeons,
" I have the honour of returning you their thanks for the Anſwer
" you have compoſed to Dr Gregory's Memorial; and of intima-
" ting to you, that the College approve of the manner in which
" you have expreſſed their general ſenſe of the relation which ex- ×
" iſts between the College of Surgeons and the Royal Infirmary.
" ——I am, Sir, Your moſt obedient ſervant,

" *John Bell, Eſq; Surgeon.* " JAMES LAW."
" *December* 9. 1800."

" This queſtion, which is of national importance, ſince it re-
" lates to the education of Young Men in a neceſſary and uſeful
" Profeſſion, is now before the country, and to be tried in the
" Courts of Juſtice."

Much was implied in the original requeſt of one party of the Junior Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons to Mr John Bell to write an Anſwer to my Memorial: and much more in the vote of thanks to him, in the name of the whole Royal College, for that great work, which he had ſo happily accompliſhed; more indeed than can eaſily be expreſſed in words.

In the former, (the requeſt), it is evidently implied, that his clients frankly acknowledged his ſuperior and unrivalled talents as a medical author, eſpecially as a controverſial writer; that they ap-

proved and admired his peculiar mode of reaſoning, and that kind of eloquence in which he chiefly excelled; and that they ſeriouſly expected that ſuch reaſoning and eloquence, employed in anſwer to me, would gain belief, would ſerve their cauſe, and contribute to raiſe themſelves and their profeſſion in the eſtimation of the public. Into this ſtrange, or, as I ſhould have thought it, impoſſible miſtake, they fell, at the very time when their own attention and that of the public was ſtrongly called to the diſgraceful and odious ſpirit of medical warfare, of which, in my former Memorial, I had given a fair account, illuſtrated by ſome good ſamples, and a few gentle alluſions to the diſputes in which their Royal College had long been embroiled, and to the ſingular inveteracy with which theſe were conducted.

In the latter (the vote of thanks) was implied, that they were pleaſed with the manner in which their ingenious and eloquent advocate had executed the honourable taſk aſſigned to him; and that, even after they had time to read and maturely conſider what he had written, and to hear what others ſaid of it, they never once ſuſpected that, whether it were true or falſe, it was much more than enough, whatever might become of their conteſt with the Managers as a legal queſtion, to damn themſelves, and their predeceſſors, in the opinion of their countrymen. But ſuch is the ſingular and admirable nature of the argument in their favour, that it may well be doubted whether they be not, by their own approbation of it, as teſtified by their vote of thanks, precluded from the benefit of that alternative, or *dilemma;* and *ipſo facto* obliged to abide by the ſimple, and, with reſpect to themſelves, the moſt unfavourable ſuppoſition, that the aſſertions contained in it are all true, and by them believed or known to be ſo. Certainly no perſon, however well acquainted with the ſpirit and inveteracy of medical warfare, could ever believe, or think it poſſible, that a whole Royal College of Surgeons, or even the majority of them, legally

legally entitled to act in the name of the whole, ſhould deliberately vote their thanks to one of their own number for aſſerting, in their cauſe, and in their name, a number of things groſsly injurious to thoſe of whom they were aſſerted, unleſs the ſaid Royal College, or the majority of it acting for the whole, believed and knew that all thoſe aſſertions were true. This kind of adoption and ſanction of the aſſertions contained in the Philippic of their own avowed agent, is evidently implied in their vote of thanks as publiſhed in the newſpapers; eſpecially as the things to which thoſe wonderful aſſertions related, muſt have been perfectly known to all of them who had been educated in this Univerſity or in this city; ſo that there could be no *miſtake* about them. But further, by the very words of the laſt clauſe of their vote of thanks to Mr John Bell, teſtifying, "That "the College approve of the manner in which you have expreſſed "their *general ſenſe* of the relation which exiſts between the Col- "lege of Surgeons and the Royal Infirmary," the attention of the public was peculiarly directed to that part of his work, undoubtedly by far the moſt intereſting, the moſt marvellous, and the moſt atrocious part of it: and the ſame public was irreſiſtibly led to believe that the College of Surgeons, whoſe *general ſenſe* it expreſſed, fully vouched for the truth of every aſſertion therein contained. The contrary ſuppoſition, that ſo reſpectable and learned a body as the College of Surgeons had thanked Mr John Bell for aſſerting, as *their general ſenſe*, a number of things, all the moſt important of which they muſt have known to be *falſe*, and many of which they muſt have known to be *impoſſible*, could never be admitted, nay ſcarce thought of, as being at once almoſt incredible, and groſsly injurious to that Royal College. To theſe public and obvious conſiderations muſt be added one or two little fragments of private hiſtory, the authenticity of which, I preſume, will not be queſtioned.

That vote of thanks was given by the Royal College of Surgeons deliberately, after due conſideration and perfect knowledge of the ſubject, and in defiance of the full warning and ſtrong remonſtrances of one of the Fellows of that College, (by name Mr John Thomſon), who ſaw clearly how much was implied in it; though probably even he did not ſuſpect what an important uſe was almoſt inſtantly to be made of it. He earneſtly, but in vain, intreated them *not* to vote the thanks of the College for ſuch a work; and to leave it to thoſe individuals to thank Mr John Bell for his "*Anſwer*," who had employed him to write it, and who conſequently were the beſt judges of its merit.

Soon after, and repeatedly ſince, even ſo lately as when I was writing and printing the latter part of the following Memorial, I had the pleaſure of hearing, that certain Fellows of that College boaſted of that very marvellous and atrocious part of the Anſwer to me, not only as an admirable ſpecimen of ſuperior genius, which I acknowledge it to be, but as a thing perfectly deciſive and unanſwerable; ſuch a thing as "*I durſt not even attempt to anſwer.*" As to its being unanſwerable, or unanſwered, they are ſtill at liberty to judge for themſelves: but at leaſt they muſt own that I have humbly ventured to attempt to anſwer it.

The invectives ſo liberally poured forth againſt myſelf perſonally, and all the marvellous aſſertions with reſpect to me, very probably might have gone unanſwered, even to the day of judgment: for long before I read them, I had learned from good authority, that "He that walketh uprightly walketh ſurely."

The ingenious attack made on me and my colleagues, the Profeſſors of Phyſic, for our pretended unworthy and diſgraceful conduct in the diſcharge of our Academical duty, might alſo have paſſed unnoticed, on the old principle, familiar to us all,

Exilis domus eſt, ubi non et multa ſuperſunt,
Et dominum fallunt; et proſunt furibus.——

If

If our credit could have been ſhaken by ſuch an attack, it would not have been worth contending for.

But the malevolent attack on the management of the Hoſpital, in the account given of the cauſe of the bad condition and cruel ſufferings of many of the Surgeons patients, and ſtill worſe in the account given of the atrocious breach of truſt in the Managers in permitting, and of the Profeſſors of Phyſic in conducting the clinical lectures, could not be allowed to paſs unanſwered. It was written in a ſtyle, and vaunted in a manner, well calculated to make it gain belief, and produce a ſtrong effect among thoſe who were moſt likely to be hurt by it: for the probable injury to be apprehended to the ſlender funds of the Infirmary, by making it an object of horror to the rich, inſtead of protection and liberal encouragement, was the leaſt of the evils in view. The cruel wrong to the poor and unhappy, who might have occaſion to ſeek relief to their miſery under the roof of this Hoſpital, was by far the moſt ſerious conſideration. It was tearing from them their laſt hope and comfort in this world: for if they believed what they found ſo boldly aſſerted, and ſo ſtrongly ſanctioned, they muſt have ſhunned the Hoſpital as the worſt of evils; or, if driven to it by hard neceſſity, they muſt have entered it with ſuch ſentiments of dread and horror, as could not fail to aggravate their ſufferings, increaſe their danger, and often render unavailing all the ſkill of Phyſicians and Surgeons, and baffle all the powers of medicine.

As I ſhould have thought myſelf, ſo I preſume I ſhould have been thought by others, to have tacitly acknowledged the truth of thoſe horrible miſrepreſentations, and to have been an accomplice in the wrong that was done, if I had failed to refute them, when the means of doing this were fully in my power. But eaſy as this work might appear in one point of view, in another it was a matter of great nicety, if not of difficulty, and required on my part peculiar caution.

Such

Such marvellous and horrible aſſertions as I have had occaſion to conſider, would ſoon and eaſily have been diſcuſſed, if they had reſted on the authority of only one individual, however eminent in medical controverſy. A mere contradiction of them, one by one, and a requeſt to have ſome evidence of them ſtated, (of which there was not a veſtige in the publication to which I allude), might well have ſufficed, according to the common maxim of law and equity, *Affirmanti incumbit probatio:* and ſuch a ſimple contradiction and requeſt, would certainly have been much more rational than the undertaking to *refute* or *diſprove* thoſe aſſertions.

But after they were adopted and ſanctioned by the Royal College of Surgeons, that mode of proceeding was not to be thought of. I ſhould have ſtood in the diſgraceful ſituation, of affirming or denying, in direct contradiction, not to one individual only, but to many, or perhaps to a whole ſociety, every individual of which might be preſumed to know as much as I did of the matters in diſpute. The honeſteſt ſmuggler that ever appeared in the Court of Exchequer, let him ſwear his beſt, would hardly ſave either his ſhip or cargo, if a dozen or two of active cuſtomhouſe officers ſwore point blank againſt every thing that he ſwore: and a ſimple tide-waiter would find it difficult to make good his ſeizure, if in the ſame court he had to ſwear ſingly againſt a whole gang of honeſt ſmugglers. My experience of medical facts and medical teſtimony, long before I ſaw the vote of thanks, would have been more than enough to deter me from engaging in ſuch a fooliſh, diſgraceful, and fruitleſs conteſt.

In compliment therefore to the Royal College of Surgeons, as well as to their very ſpirited and eloquent Advocate, I have followed a very different plan; more tedious and laborious I muſt confeſs, but, I truſt, much more effectual for my purpoſe, as well as more reſpectful and honourable to them. Inſtead of merely contradicting, and requiring of them to prove what they had aſ-

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ſerted, I have on every important point carefully ſtated my *reaſons* for diſtruſting or contradicting them. Theſe *reaſons* appear to me ſo ſtrong as *bona fide* to diſprove all the moſt important of their pretended facts. If they think otherwiſe, it will be eaſy, and I dare ſay very pleaſant, to them, to ſhow the imperfection or fallacy of the reaſons which I have aſſigned for diſbelieving their moſt confident aſſertions. They probably did not expect ſuch a patient and candid proceeding on my part: but they cannot take it amiſs; nay they cannot, without abſurdity and inconſiſtency, fail to be highly pleaſed with it. They cannot fail to ſee that I meet them fairly on that ground which they themſelves have choſen. As to the difference of the weapons which we employ; they have taken their choice of thoſe which they thought beſt for the purpoſe of attack: and I am well pleaſed to ſee them uſe ſo dexterouſly thoſe weapons with which nature has wiſely and liberally provided them;

" *Its proper power to hurt, each creature feels;*
" *Bulls aim their horns, and aſſes lift their heels;*
" *'Tis a bear's talent not to kick, but hug;*
" *And no man wonders he's not ſtung by Pug.*"

But they muſt excuſe me if I decline attempting to uſe the ſame weapons, which I am no more capable of managing, than I am of wielding the ſpear of Goliath, the club of Hercules, or the ſhield of Achilles. I truſt they will allow me to uſe, as it is merely for the purpoſe of defence, and without even the poſſibility of annoying them, the innocent weapons of plain truth, and fair, though ſtrict reaſoning.

They have taken care to expreſs fully and candidly, that is, Mr John Bell, in their name and with their ſanction, has declared explicitly (*Anſwer*, page 16.) their ignorance of logic. The truth of this modeſt and candid avowal cannot be doubted, as it is accompanied

companied with ſome unequivocal proofs of that lamentable deficiency: but if they are not alſo incapable of learning the firſt principles of logic, which I think they will hardly pretend that they are, for this would be equivalent to pretending that they are idiots, they muſt ſurely underſtand and admit, when they are pointed out to them, and illuſtrated by proper examples from their own publication, ſome of thoſe common principles of logic, of which I have endeavoured to avail myſelf. They ſurely muſt underſtand, and believe, that every propoſition, for example, every thing which they have aſſerted in their publication, muſt be either *true* or *falſe*. If what they have aſſerted be *true*, then I, and my colleagues, eſpecially the Clinical Profeſſors, and the Managers of the Infirmary, muſt be infamous and odious, and muſt all deſerve to be hanged. Of this I preſume they were fully aware at the time of the vote of thanks; but I doubt whether they were equally aware of what the conſequence muſt be to themſelves, in public eſtimation, that is in point of fame and fortune, for the reſt of their lives, if their aſſertions with reſpect to us are *falſe*, and ſhall be completely diſproved. Yet ſurely they muſt ſee this conſequence when it is pointed out to them; and of courſe muſt be eager to eſtabliſh, by the moſt convincing proofs, their original aſſertions, both for their own vindication in point of veracity and probity, and for the laudable purpoſe of convicting us of that baſe and atrocious conduct, which they have ſo boldly laid to our charge.

Whatever they may have known, or hereafter may chooſe to do, on that point, I am convinced they did not originally, and perhaps do not yet perceive another ſtill more dire dilemma into which they have blindly run, in their great eagerneſs to make the Profeſſors of Phyſic, and the Managers of the Infirmary, collectively, as well as myſelf individually, odious and infamous in the eſtimation of the public. But if they will attend fairly to their own aſ-

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ſertions and arguments, and to my logical commentary on them, they will find that the ſad dilemma ſtands thus. If their aſſertions are *falſe*, they themſelves muſt be infamous: this I preſume they will not diſpute: but if their aſſertions are *true*, they muſt be ſtill more infamous, and odious, and certainly ought all to be hanged; for their own conduct, and the ſhare which they have had, both paſſively and actively, in thoſe horrible atrocities: I mean not only for their guilt, in tacitly conniving long at ſuch things, but, ſtill worſe, for their active exertions in making them more extenſive, and perpetual; and even for repreſenting the worſt of them as things allowable and praiſe-worthy: a ſentiment which, to my utter aſtoniſhment, they have ſtrongly avowed in their Anſwer to me.

It is neither my buſineſs nor my inclination to help them out of that dilemma into which they have run. If this be poſſible, which I greatly doubt, they muſt do it for themſelves. I cannot even aſk of them to acknowledge the *error* of what they have ſaid of myſelf, of my colleagues, and of the Managers of the Infirmary: for ſuch an appeal to their candour, veracity, and probity, they would conſider, not as a compliment, but as a bitter ſarcaſm and inſult. I cannot aſk of them to prove their aſſertions with reſpect to us, or even to refute that evidence which I have given in contradiction of their aſſertions; for they cannot fail to perceive, that every ſuch attempt on their part would be an additional proof and illuſtration of all that I have ſaid of them, and their facts, and their reaſonings. I cannot aſk of them to acquieſce ſilently in my refutation of their marvellous aſſertions, without either acknowledging their own numerous and complicated *errors*, or attempting to prove and eſtabliſh their own *facts*, which I have preſumed to diſprove; for they cannot fail to know that ſuch ſilent acquieſcence on their part, in ſuch circumſtances, would imply that they felt, but had not candour enough to acknowledge, the truth and juſtneſs of all

that I have ſaid of them. I need not aſk of them to favour the world with a new ſet of facts, more wonderful and more atrocious than the laſt, and more injurious to me, and to my colleagues, and to the Managers of the Infirmary; for this they will do of courſe, if they think it poſſible that their new facts ſhall be believed, while their old facts remain unproved, contradicted, and diſproved. But they are heartily welcome to try the experiment. If any one of them, either ſingly, or in the name, and with the ſanction and vote of thanks of his brethren, chooſes to publiſh, in another pamphlet, or in the newſpapers, that I have been guilty of many acts of horſe-ſtealing, houſe-breaking, and highway robbery, that I was ſentenced to tranſportation for fourteen years, and am in danger of being hanged for returning before my time was expired; all which aſſertions are juſt as true, and as much to the purpoſe of their conteſt with the Managers of the Infirmary, and ſcarce ſo atrocious, as the moſt important of thoſe contained in Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me; they may be aſſured, that, far from being offended by ſuch a publication, I ſhall be highly gratified.

As far as my ſingle vote can go, they are equally welcome to pay their compliments handſomely to all the Profeſſors of Phyſic, collectively, in any ſuch publication: indeed I ſhould be ſorry if my learned colleagues had not at leaſt ſome ſhare of ſuch an honourable teſtimonial.

But, unleſs they can give ſome very good reaſon for endeavouring to make the Managers of the Infirmary and the Hoſpital itſelf objects of indignation and horror to the inhabitants of this city, I muſt humbly and earneſtly beg of Mr John Bell and his clients, to abſtain in future from all ſuch attempts; the injuſtice and cruelty of which, relatively to the poor and unhappy, I have endeavoured to point out. They are heartily welcome to ſuggeſt to the Managers, to the ordinary Phyſicians and Surgeons, and to the Clinical Profeſſors, whatever they think will be for the good of the

the patients, with reſpect either to medical treatment, or to the general management of the Hoſpital. I can have no doubt that the Managers and the medical ſervants of the Infirmary will faithfully attend to all ſuch ſuggeſtions; and do, as in duty bound, what they are convinced is beſt for the ſick poor intruſted to their care. But if, contrary to all reaſonable expectation, they ſhall fail in that duty, if they ſhall refuſe to liſten to any ſuggeſtions of improvement, or if they ſhall obſtinately refuſe to do what is clearly ſhewn to be right; then certainly Mr John Bell and his clients will be entitled to make their conduct the ſubject of the moſt public and ſevere reprehenſion.

Whatever regard they may pay to this requeſt, there is yet another which I muſt urge very ſtrongly to them, in full confidence that they will comply with it, as ſoon as they are aware of the nature and reaſon of it, and the importance of it to their own profeſſional brethren. It is only this, That in whatever terms they may hereafter chuſe to revile me individually, and my colleagues the Profeſſors of Phyſic, and the Managers of the Infirmary, collectively, and whatever facts they may chuſe to aſſert with reſpect to us, they will fairly and openly put their names to their own publications, and to any vote of thanks, or other teſtimony of approbation, by which they mean to ſanction them, and recommend them to the public. They will underſtand that I wiſh them to avoid uſing any ſuch general, collective, ambiguous appellations as that of the junior members of the Royal College of Surgeons, or even that of the Royal College of Surgeons, unleſs all the junior Fellows, or all the Fellows of the College, individually, concur in the aſſertions and ſentiments ſo recommended and ſanctioned. The *right* of the majority of the College of Surgeons to act for the whole, and in the name of the whole, cannot be diſputed: but it is at leaſt indelicate, if not worſe, for the majority of their ſociety to uſe *that* right in ſuch a manner as may be greatly and permanently

nently injurious to the minority, even in point of profeſſional and pecuniary intereſt; or to make it be believed that the minority had any ſhare in tranſactions and ſentiments, which they always reprobated as diſhonourable in themſelves, and diſgraceful to their profeſſion.

By the letter prefixed to Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, every reader, not previouſly in the ſecret, muſt have underſtood, that all the junior Surgeons concurred in that requeſt to him to anſwer my Memorial: but in fact SIX of them had no more concern in that requeſt than they had in the gunpowder treaſon. The caſe is ſtill ſtronger with reſpect to the vote of thanks for that Anſwer, which vote was publiſhed in the newſpapers. That vote of thanks, far from expreſſing the general or unanimous ſenſe of every Fellow of the College individually, probably did not expreſs the ſenſe, even of the majority, perhaps of very little more than a third part, of their whole number. To the beſt of my information and belief, twenty-nine was the greateſt number preſent at any of the meetings of their College about that time; of whom I am certain that FOURTEEN never did or could concur in ſuch a vote of thanks. The whole number of the Fellows of the College of Surgeons at that time, I believe, was forty-ſix: but of this number at leaſt a third part did not attend the meetings of the College, or take any concern in its tranſactions.

The wrong done, firſt to the minority of the younger ſurgeons, ſecondly to the minority of the whole Royal College, by the uſe of thoſe collective names, was groſs and glaring; and my remarks on that requeſt and that vote of thanks would have made the wrong ſtill greater, if I had not taken care to do juſtice to them individually, by publiſhing their names, (page 80. and 101. of the following Memorial), and teſtifying that they had no ſhare in the tranſactions in queſtion, and that conſequently none of my remarks were applicable to them. With equal eaſe I could have publiſhed the names of the *majorities*, whoſe conduct has given occaſion to thoſe remarks; but I refrained from that rigorous iron juſtice, in conſideration

ſideration of a well-known maxim, *Summum jus, ſumma injuria.* The conſequences of ſuch an expoſure might have been very ſerious to them individually, in point of fame and fortune, for the reſt of their lives; and what they and others might well have thought too ſevere a puniſhment for ſuch a peccadillo as theirs. But this is to be underſtood with a *ſalvo jure* to them: If any one, or all, of them ſhall chooſe to avow as their own thoſe aſſertions and ſentiments, for which they voted their thanks, and which I have taken the liberty to diſcuſs, I have no objections.

The ſituation of one gentleman, who concurred with the majority of the College of Surgeons in thoſe tranſactions, was ſo particular, that it is but juſtice to him to mention what it was, and to make an exception in his favour; more eſpecially as he is already gone from Edinburgh, with a declared reſolution of never returning to it, and conſequently has not a fair opportunity to judge and act for himſelf on the preſent occaſion. The perſon to whom I allude is Mr Flanagan, an Iriſh Gentleman, who had not been educated in this city, and came to it between three and four years ago, an utter ſtranger, I believe, to every perſon in it, not excepting his own profeſſional brethren. But as he was a ſtranger, they took him in: he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh in the year 1800, and was the laſt who attended in the Infirmary on the ſyſtem of rotation. Before he left Edinburgh, which I believe was ſome time in 1802, I had the pleaſure of receiving from him the moſt convincing and gratifying evidence that he had formed an opinion of me widely different from that which he muſt have had when he concurred in the vote of thanks to Mr John Bell for his Anſwer to my Memorial. From ſome circumſtances which have come to my knowledge, I ſtrongly ſuſpect that he found himſelf equally miſtaken in the opinions which he firſt imbibed of ſome other perſons, and of ſome things in Edinburgh. It ſeems to me but reaſona b le

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and juſt, *not* to hold him reſponſible for any thing contained in the "*Anſwer*," except what he chooſes deliberately to avow and take upon himſelf; which I ſhrewdly ſuſpect will be very little or nothing.

Laſtly, As to Mr John Bell himſelf, to whom I ſhould be peculiarly ſorry to do any injuſtice, and whom I ſhould not wiſh even to preclude from any of thoſe advantages to which he is entitled by his twofold character of advocate and party; for reaſons already ſtated, page v. of this Preface, and which will appear ſtill more clearly in the following pages, I have thought myſelf bound to conſider him in the capacity of an Advocate pleading the cauſe of others. That this is chiefly, if not ſolely, the caſe, is evident from his own declarations to me, from the letter prefixed to his Anſwer, and from the vote of thanks of his clients, teſtifying that he had expreſſed their general ſenſe of the principal ſubject diſcuſſed in it: and I believe, if he were ſo diſpoſed, he could eaſily prove, that many of the ſentiments moſt ſtrongly expreſſed in it are diametrically oppoſite to his own. But I have no right, and no wiſh, to obtrude on him that ſuppoſition. He is welcome to chooſe for himſelf, whether he ſhall be regarded only as an Advocate, implying, that he does not vouch for the truth of the aſſertions, and the juſtneſs of the ſentiments, which he has expreſſed with ſuch eloquence and force; or as a Party in the conteſt, implying, that he ſtill maintains thoſe aſſertions and ſentiments, that he ſtakes his character, in point of probity and veracity, on the truth of them, and that he *bona fide* undertakes to prove what he had ſo deliberately and ſtrongly aſſerted.

J. G.

St Andrew's Square,
23d June 1803.

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ADDITIONAL MEMORIAL

BY

DR GREGORY.

IT was eaſy to foreſee that the Memorial, which ſix months ago I had the honour to addreſs to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, would be to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs; but it was impoſſible ever to have dreamed that it was to have ſuch effects as it has actually produced; that it was ſoon to give occaſion to publications which would have done honour to the Royal College of Surgeons in Jeruſalem in the days of Solomon, and that it was to call forth arguments and anſwers, which neither Solomon himſelf, nor the ſeven ſages of Greece, if they had all been of his cabinet council, could ever have deviſed.

Very few of theſe publications require any reply, or any animadverſions, on my part; for not only thoſe which were intended to enforce and confirm my argument, but thoſe which were intended to refute and overturn it, tend almoſt equally to illuſtrate and eſtabliſh all that I had advanced.

But ſome of the writers to whoſe works I allude, have taken ſo much pains, and have done ſuch eſſential ſervice to my cauſe, that they

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deſerve my beſt acknowledgments and thanks for their labours; and ſome of their lucubrations ſeem to require, as well as to deſerve from me, a few notes, explanatory, hiſtorical, and critical, which I can eaſily furniſh, and which it would be uncivil at leaſt, if not ungrateful, in me to with-hold.

OBSERVATIONS *on Mr* ARROT'S REMARKS.

Mr Arrot, one of the ſenior Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, has given the following *brief* account of the bargain between the Managers of the Infirmary and the Corporation of Surgeons in 1738.

" The practice of ſurgical attendance now exiſting in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, has endured for no leſs than ſixty years. At its commencement, it was not lightly or raſhly adopted, but was the fruit of much deliberate negociation between different bodies of men in this city. Two Hoſpitals had been formed for the charitable purpoſe of affording relief to the diſeaſed poor in the neighbourhood. One of theſe Hoſpitals was under the management of the leading Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, and the other was ſuperintended by a number of gentlemen, who had been incorporated by royal charter. At that time, the chirurgical department of this laſt Hoſpital, was intruſted to ſix Surgeons, choſen by the Managers. As it was found, however, that the exiſtence of two rival Hoſpitals was prejudicial to the intereſts of both, a negociation was entered into, for uniting them into one eſtabliſhment, and was at laſt happily brought to a concluſion, in the year 1738, upon the following conditions:

It was ſtipulated, That the whole funds of the Hoſpital which was ſuperintended by the leading Members of the College of Surgeons, ſhould be transferred to the Incorporation of the Royal Infirmary;

mary; and that all the Members of the College of Surgeons, ſhould, when neceſſary, give their attendance to the patients in the united Hoſpital. And, on the other hand, it was agreed, that the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, in all time coming, ſhould not only permit this attendance, but that they ſhould not attempt to introduce any inequality or preference in the employment of the individual Members of the College of Surgeons, in their attendance on the Royal Infirmary."

Brevis eſſe laboro, obſcurus fio. Mr Arrot's account of that memorable tranſaction is ſo brief as to give hardly any notion, or at beſt a very obſcure, and imperfect, and erroneous notion of it, of the motives which led to it, and of the manner in which it was conducted. The two paragraphs quoted from his paper, contain nothing but what is true; but they do not contain the whole truth. They contain but a ſmall part, and, to the beſt of my judgment, the leaſt intereſting part of the truth.

For aught that appears in them, the Royal Infirmary and the Surgeons Hoſpital might have been coeval, or the latter might have been eſtabliſhed long before the former: The Infirmary might have been eſtabliſhed without neceſſity, in rivalſhip or oppoſition to the Surgeons Hoſpital; this oppoſition might have proceeded from the moſt unworthy motives in the founders of the Infirmary; from the moſt ſordid views of private intereſt; from perſonal malevolence and envy; from profeſſional rancour, or malignant corporation-diſputes; and the conductors of the Surgeons Hoſpital might have been forced to ſubmit to thoſe cruel terms which were dictated by the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, and to conclude with them a bargain diſadvantageous and diſtreſſing to themſelves perſonally, bad even for the charitable inſtitution which they patroniſed, and unjuſt to the ſick poor whom they charitably wiſhed to relieve. All this they might have been ſuppoſed to have done for fear of that utter ruin which the influence and exertions

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of ſo powerful a corporation as the Royal Infirmary were likely to bring on the ſlender funds of the Surgeons Hoſpital.

But ſomething very nearly the direct contrary of all this was the truth. The Royal Infirmary was eſtabliſhed on a rational, humane, and liberal plan, long before the Surgeons Hoſpital was thought of. This Hoſpital was eſtabliſhed evidently and notoriouſly in oppoſition to the Royal Infirmary, and for a purpoſe very different from what was at firſt pretended, but never believed; for as ſoon as that unworthy purpoſe was accompliſhed, the Surgeons Hoſpital was given up, and the ſick poor, and the charitable contributions of the benevolent, were allowed to go to the Royal Infirmary.

The bargain, notoriouſly and intuitively bad for the ſick poor, for whoſe benefit the Infirmary was inſtituted, was *forced* upon the Managers againſt their deliberate and better judgment, repeatedly expreſſed, and openly ſhewn, in the ſtrongeſt manner, by their conduct in the appointing of a few of the moſt ſkilful Surgeons to be ordinary Surgeons of the Infirmary: It was forced upon them in violation of their charter, and in repugnance to the common ſenſe of mankind, as ſhewn by the mode, adopted in all other places, of appointing Phyſicians and Surgeons to hoſpitals: It was forced on the Managers by an aſſociation of Surgeons; the majority, I preſume, of the Gentlemen of that profeſſion in Edinburgh: but if it had been done by the whole corporation unanimouſly, the caſe would not have been one jot mended. The motives of theſe Surgeons for what they did, were, in one plain word, *abominable:* neither more nor leſs than malignant envy and jealouſy of a few of their own profeſſional brethren, who, they feared, would, by their permanent attendance in the Hoſpital, acquire greater ſkill and manual dexterity as operators, and higher reputation, and conſequently more lucrative practice, than the many not employed in the Hoſpital. The means by which thoſe

Surgeons

Surgeons accompliſhed their purpoſe were *deteſtable*. They forced the Managers to ſubmit to their terms, not by ſhewing that their plan would be for the good of the patients, nay, not even by pretending that they thought ſo, for the contrary was irreſiſtibly implied, and almoſt expreſſed, in their own manifeſto; but by eſtabliſhing a rival Hoſpital in oppoſition to the Infirmary, and exerting themſelves to the utmoſt to procure for their own Hoſpital thoſe charitable contributions which otherwiſe would have come to the Infirmary: In ſhort, by endeavouring to intercept the very needful ſupplies, and thus to fruſtrate the benevolent purpoſe for which the Infirmary was eſtabliſhed. None of theſe overt acts, nor even of the motives from which they proceeded, can admit of doubt, or be explained away; the facts ſtand recorded in our minutes: the motives, happily, are avowed with little or no diſguiſe, by the Surgeons themſelves in their own printed Memorial.

Of all theſe things, ſo intereſting in judging of the queſtion at preſent in agitation, not one word is ſaid by Mr Arrot in his ſtate of the caſe: nor could it even be inferred or gueſſed from any thing which appears in his paper, that ſuch things had ever been done, or ſuch unworthy motives ever avowed.

Probably he thought it unneceſſary to dwell on things ſo unpleaſant in themſelves, ſo little edifying, ſo little to the honour of human nature in general, and of his own profeſſion in particular. Perhaps he thought the account which I had given of them ſo full and accurate as to ſuperſede all further diſcuſſion, or even mention of ſuch things, which certainly are *ſacro digna ſilentio*. But, if this was his meaning, he muſt have overlooked a very obvious and ſtrong conſideration; that his paper was likely to fall into the hands of many people who never ſaw mine, and who knew not one word of what it contained; and who had never even ſeen that admirable Memorial of the Surgeons in 1737, which I have had the honour to diſſect and anatomiſe. Such people muſt have

been

been ſtrangely miſled, nay kept in the dark; deprived of all means of ſetting themſelves right, or even of diſcovering that they were wrong.

But I almoſt doubt whether Mr Arrot himſelf perceived the importance of thoſe things which I had ſtated ſo fully, and which he completely omitted. From the coolneſs with which he mentions the general tenor of the bargain, and from the very gentle terms in which he expreſſes that "it was agreed, that the Mana-"gers ſhould not only permit this attendance," (of all the members of the College of Surgeons), "but that they ſhould not at-"tempt to introduce any inequality or preference in the employ-"ment of the individual members of the College of Surgeons, in "their attendance on the Royal Infirmary;" it ſhould ſeem that he had not diſcovered the abſurdity, the injuſtice, the cruelty, the turpitude of ſuch a bargain. I can ſcarce think he underſtood by it, what it certainly means, and neceſſarily implies, that the worſt Surgeons in Edinburgh, indiſcriminately with the beſt, were in their turn to officiate as Surgeons to the Infirmary; and this either for ſo ſhort a time as to make it impoſſible for them to acquire any conſiderable improvement, or if for a longer time, ſo that they might improve a little, then with the certainty that they could never again act as Surgeons to the Hoſpital.

Suppoſing him to be perfectly convinced, that at the time when the bargain in queſtion was made (1738) all the members of the corporation of Surgeons were equally and perfectly qualified to act as Surgeons to the Royal Infirmary; ſuppoſing, further, that he is equally convinced that the caſe is juſt the ſame with all the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons at preſent; it is ſurely impoſſible that he, or that any man in his right wits, can believe that this will always be the caſe.

If all the preſent Fellows of that College were removed to a better world, their places would ſoon be filled by at leaſt an equal, probably

probably a greater number of gentlemen of the ſame profeſſion: and whether this happens in half an hour, or in half a century, it is the ſame for my argument: happen it muſt, ſooner or later. Sooner or later, all the preſent performers muſt quit the ſtage, and fifty, an hundred, two hundred others, will come upon it. Of theſe yet unheard of, yet unborn, Surgeons, ſome, probably four or five times as many as can ever be wanted for the duty of this Hoſpital, will be men of ſenſe, and knowlege, and ſkill in every part of their profeſſion, good operators, attentive, humane, and diligent in the diſcharge of every part of their duty, and withal, men of good tempers, and modeſt gentle manners, who live, or wiſh to live, on good terms with all their profeſſional brethren; and ready to give the moſt candid and patient attention to the opinions and advice of their brethren with whom they meet in conſultation. In ſhort, they may be every thing that the Managers could reaſonably expect, or wiſh, in Surgeons, for the good of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, or for themſelves or their families if they needed the aſſiſtance of Surgeons at home. Such men will naturally obtain general eſteem and confidence, and will deſervedly riſe to eminence in their profeſſion. But it is *impoſſible* that *all* of them ſhould be men of ſuch talents, ſuch qualifications, and ſuch characters. It is juſt as abſurd to expect ſuch uniformity of merit among them, as it would be to expect that they ſhould all be of the ſame ſtature, the ſame complection, and the ſame features. The minds of men ever were, and ever will be, at leaſt as various as their bodies. Of the many individuals, who in the courſe of this century are to become Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, ſome will be half mad, and others more than half ſtupid; ſome will be groſsly ignorant of their profeſſion, of which perhaps they may never have learned any more than juſt enough to enable them to *paſs* at their examination; and even this little they may have learned by means of a Short Catechiſm, which

they

they never underſtood, but only got by rote. Some ſmart lads may have had a good deal of knowledge juſt when they came out of their apprenticeſhips, nine tenths of which they may have forgotten in the courſe of five, ten, or twenty years, paſſed without ſtudy, and with little or no practice. Some may have excellent fingers and thumbs, but without brains enough to know when and how to uſe them; others may have brains enough, and theſe very good of their kind, who may be lamentably deficient in point of fingers and thumbs; ſome may be ſavages in their diſpoſitions, and brutes in their manners; ſome may be very fine gentlemen, minutely acquainted with all the moſt faſhionable cures for the faſhionable diſtemper, and perhaps well qualified to treat any common caſe of that moſt important diſorder, but withal of ſuch general character, habits, and conduct, that no perſon in his ſenſes would ever think of employing them for the cure of any other diſeaſe: Some, from real bad temper, or perſonal animoſity, and rancorous malevolence, envy, and jealouſy, others from mere vanity and arrogance, may live in a ſtate of open warfare, or, what is worſe, of ſecret enmity, with many or all of their profeſſional brethren, ſeeking every opportunity to undermine them, to ſupplant them, to thwart them in their practice, to cenſure, expoſe, and miſrepreſent every thing that they ſay or do: Some may be drunk every evening with punch, and others every morning with brandy; and ſome may not be quite ſober at noon.

If it were propoſed to give to ſuch undeſerving members of the Royal College of Surgeons, excluſively, the right of attending and operating in the Hoſpital, expreſsly ſetting aſide all the men of merit of their profeſſion; all deliberate conſiderations of the injuſtice, the cruelty, and the atrocity of ſuch a ſcheme, would be loſt in the obvious thought of the extravagant inſanity of which it would be regarded as a deciſive proof. Yet, whatever is abſurd, unjuſt, and cruel in it, is juſt as bad, on the plan of indiſcriminate rotation, to thoſe unfortunate

unfortunate patients who happen to be in the Hoſpital when ſuch men attend in it, as if no others ever attended, and is in no degree compenſated to ſuch patients, by the undiſputed merit of all the other members of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Yet ſuch is the force of habit, and ſuch the influence of plauſible words, that all theſe ſtrong conſiderations, obvious and undeniable as they are, ſeem to have completely eſcaped the notice of Mr Arrot, even when deliberately writing and printing on the ſubject.

Though he was not perſonally concerned in the tranſaction of 1738, nor (probably) in the violent and long diſpute between the Managers and the Surgeons about it thirty years afterwards; and though, from his long ſtanding and eſtabliſhed character in his profeſſion, he can have no private intereſt in preſerving that odious ſyſtem; he yet contends for it with great warmth and eloquence, only propoſing ſome new modifications of it, the advantages of which modifications I have not the honour to underſtand.

He ſeems to think that there was ſomething honourable, and generous, public-ſpirited, and benevolent to their brethren, in the conduct of thoſe who forced the Managers of the Infirmary to make that cruel bargain; and with all the fire and all the pathetic eloquence of a Roman patriot, he exhorts his brethren of the preſent day manfully to contend to the utmoſt for their ſacred rights. He has expreſſed, in plain and humble proſe, what long ſince was better expreſſed in heroic verſe;

Remember, O my friends, the laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power, delivered down
From age to age by your renowned forefathers,
So dearly bought, the price of ſo much blood.
O let it never periſh in your hands,
But piouſly tranſmit it to your children!

I muſt acknowledge my obligations to Mr Arrot, for the trouble he has taken to ſet me right as to the particulars of what paſſed, and even as to the number of perſons who were preſent, at that grand conſultation of Surgeons in the Royal Infirmary, which I have mentioned in my Memorial, (Page 197, 198, 199.), in what Mr Arrot is pleaſed to call ſuch ludicrous terms.

In the firſt place, I am obliged to him for thus vouching for me that there really was ſuch a conſultation; for I ſhould not have been in the leaſt ſurpriſed, if ſome wiſeacres had taken it into their noble heads that the account which I gave of it was altogether a fiction of my own; juſt as ſome others, in their great wiſdom, have been pleaſed to think of the account which I gave of our everlaſting medical warfare; of the two hundred years war about bleeding from the one arm or the other in a pleuriſy; of the furious diſpute among the London Doctors about purging in the ſecondary fever of the ſmall-pox; and of many other of our bitter diſputes.

No men of ſenſe can juſtly be blamed for being ſlow and unwilling to believe that any men not abſolutely inſane ſhould ever have engaged or perſevered in ſuch abſurd diſputes, or ſhould have conducted them in ſo abſurd a manner. If only one half of what I have heard be true, ſome medical gentlemen, who ought to have known better, have falleninto that honourable miſtake.

For the ſatisfaction of all ſuch diſtruſtful and ignorant readers, I beg leave to declare once for all, that every thing which, either in my former Memorial or in this, is ſtated as a matter of fact, is true, to the beſt of my knowledge, information, and belief. Of the juſtneſs of my obſervations and reaſonings founded on thoſe facts, every perſon is entitled, and is heartily welcome, to judge for himſelf. As to the particular controverſies to which I here allude, if any gentleman, whether of the medical profeſſion or not, has any further curioſity or diſtruſt about them, and will apply to

me,

me, I engage to ſhow him complete authority for all that I have ſaid of them, and to refer him to the original authors, in whom he will find the whole detail of that nonſenſe which I have mentioned but briefly, and in general terms. My account of it appears ludicrous, and to ſome people incredible, only becauſe I have brought ſo many choice ſpecimens together, and arranged them on a new plan, and in ſuch a manner that they all tend ſtrongly to illuſtrate one another, and to eſtabliſh that general principle according to which they are arranged. This purpoſe they anſwer ſo well, that they almoſt appear to have been contrived expreſsly for it.

Mr Arrot is well qualified to vouch for the reality of that conſultation, by much the moſt formidable that ever I witneſſed; for he was preſent at it, and, what is curious, he was on my ſide, and the only perſon that was ſo. Both theſe circumſtances I had either forgotten, or, more probably, had never known. The truth is, I came in upon them *in mediis rebus*, that is, when they were in the middle of their conſultation, and my poor patient in the middle of them. Mr Arrot, however, cannot be miſtaken as to his having been of the conſultation, and having differed in opinion from all his brethren, and from Dr Monro, and having agreed with me---which is very flattering to me. I can vouch for the facts, that Dr Monro was there, and that he was againſt me, to my very great mortification; for, though I do not profeſs never to differ in opinion from Dr Monro, yet I am always ſorry when it happens; and I have the vanity to think that it happens very ſeldom. But, till I read Mr Arrot's paper, I never knew, nor ſuſpected, that Dr Monro's opinion had ſuch weight or authority with the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, as to make them implicitly adopt his ſentiments, or even agree with one another on any one point. On the contrary, from all that I had ever ſeen or heard, I ſhould rather have expected from it the very oppoſite effect.

As Mr Arrot remembers ſo well that curious ſcene, I ſhould beg of him, the firſt day that he has leiſure, to ſtep in to Archer's Hall, and look at the picture of Daniel in the den of lions, (which is an excellent copy of the famous picture by Rubens at Hamilton), and then ſay whether the likeneſs be not very ſtriking, I mean particularly the likeneſs in face and perſon between the prophet and the patient; for as to the likeneſſes between the individual lions and certain Surgeons who flouriſhed here at the time of that conſultation, (ſome fifteen or twenty years ago, I ſuppoſe), they certainly are much leſs perfect. But I have no doubt that a man of a quick eye, and ſome imagination, and competent knowledge of the phyſiognomies and *coſtume* of the Royal College of Surgeons at that time, may even yet find out ſome of them, and give to ſeveral grim members of that tremendous conſultation " a local habitation " and a name," with much plauſibility of conjecture; it being underſtood always as a fixed general principle, that the lioneſſes, who have no mane, repreſent the *crops*, while the male lions, with their majeſtic manes, very properly repreſent the graver and more awful members of the Royal College of Surgeons, who wore long hair or great wigs.

It happens, however, ſomewhat unaccountably, that while we agree perfectly as to the general facts, that there was ſuch a conſultation, and with ſuch a reſult as I have mentioned; nay, while we agree as to ſome of the more minute particulars of it, we yet differ materially as to the number of Surgeons who were preſent. Mr Arrot ſays, that, " to the beſt of his recollection, the perſons " preſent amounted to twelve or fourteen." To the beſt of my remembrance and judgment, I ſhould rather think there had been twelve or fourteen perſons between the door and the middle of the room, juſt oppoſite to the fire-place, farther than which I did not penetrate. But even to get ſo far I was obliged to ſqueeze and

ſhuffle

ſhuffle through the crowd; and ſo far as I could ſee, by faint candle-light, the inner part of the room, including both the corner directly oppoſite, and the one diagonally oppoſite to the door, appeared equally crowded. I am ſure there were ſeveral faces there the names of which I did not know, and which I was not accuſtomed to ſee there, and probably had never ſeen before. Then Mr Arrot ſhould conſider, that twelve or fourteen perſons do not give the appearance of a crowd, and, in fact, are no uncommon number in that room. Though probably I have not been quite ſo often as he has been in that conſulting room, yet I am ſure I have been in it more than two thouſand times, often enough, I preſume, to know tolerably well what is, or rather what was, the uſual complement of perſons in it. The two ordinary phyſicians, with each his clerk, the clinical profeſſor, with his two clerks, the apothecary or his aſſiſtant, or perhaps both, attending with their reports, one or two, or perhaps more, military ſurgeons (garriſon or regimental) come to enquire about their men, the ordinary ſurgeon, and his aſſiſtant, and his clerk (or houſe-ſurgeon), and a ſnug little conſultation of only three or four other Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, ſuch as uſed often to aſſemble, without any particular ſummons, juſt to conſult about the weather, and the news, medical or political, and the ſtate of the nation, according to my arithmetic, make fully twelve or fourteen perſons; and ſuch a number, I think, could ſcarce have appeared to me any way extraordinary. On occaſions when a conſultation, even an ordinary one, was ſummoned, I am pretty ſure that I have ſeen at leaſt twelve or fourteen Surgeons in the conſulting room, and that this was not at all extraordinary. But the conſultation in queſtion was called as a very extraordinary one, as appears by Dr Monro having been ſummoned to it, and by its being known in a few hours to ſo great a number of ſtudents. It was underſtood, by miſtake, in conſequence of ſome impropriety of expreſſion in me or my clerk, to be a conſultation on a moſt extraordinary

ordinary and urgent caſe, which could admit of no delay, as appeared by its being held in the evening by candle-light; and I believed at that time, and am ſtill very much inclined to believe, that all, or almoſt all, who had a right to be in the conſulting room, and all who, without any ſuch right, had intereſt, or acquaintance, or dexterity enough to get themſelves ſqueezed into it, were there bodily preſent.

Theſe things I mention only to ſhow that there was no wilful exaggeration or miſrepreſentation in the account which I gave of that adventure; for as I did not count the perſons preſent, and doubt whether I could have counted them, I can have no pretenſions to put my vague notion of a great crowd there aſſembled, in competition with Mr Arrot's more preciſe eſtimate of twelve or fourteen perſons being preſent.

With reſpect to my general argument and concluſion, nay even with reſpect to that individual example and illuſtration, it is perfectly indifferent whether there were twelve *or* fourteen, or twelve *and* fourteen, or twelve times fourteen perſons preſent at that memorable conſultation. It certainly was a numerous one; the reſult of it was "a very harmleſs but inſignificant preſcription;" and the patient died accordingly.

Mr Arrot moſt judiciouſly obſerves, "I ſhould account it very "bad logic to conclude, that majorities muſt always be wrong, "becauſe I have ſometimes happened to be in a minority." This is unqueſtionably right; but I do not think him equally right or equally fortunate in another obſervation or maxim, which he has expreſſed in the preceding part of the ſame ſentence, in theſe words; "I am ſatisfied that in the multitude of *counſel* there is *wiſdom*." I ſhould ſcarce have underſtood to what he alluded, if I had not occaſionally heard ſeveral other perſons quote the ſame unlucky maxim, and moſt heretically pretend that Solomon, the wiſeſt of men, was the author of it. But he was too wiſe a man, and too well acquainted

quainted with mankind, and with the folly of a vaſt majority of them, ever to have entertained ſuch an opinion.

As a ſmall acknowledgment for the kindneſs which Mr Arrot has ſhewn to me, I ſhall beg leave to ſet him right on that important point. I do not mean to inſinuate, that he has wilfully miſrepreſented the text of ſcripture, in order to favour thoſe multitudinous and ill-aſſorted conſultations of Surgeons which I reprobate, and for which he contends; nor yet that he has preſumptuouſly endeavoured to improve on the wiſdom of Solomon. But as that heterodox reading of an important text is likely to have very bad conſequences, and, far from being peculiar to Mr Arrot, is but too common among many well-meaning people, I ſuſpect that their miſtake proceeds from their being all provided with ſome erroneous edition of the Bible, probably the very one which contained the unlucky commandment, "Thou *ſhalt* commit adultery," inſtead of the genuine reading, "Thou ſhalt *not* commit adultery." That erroneous edition of the Bible, I believe, was publiſhed in the time of Charles I. and has been in great requeſt ever ſince, eſpecially among people of faſhion. To this circumſtance Mr Addiſon, who certainly was a competent judge of the ſubject, attributes the alarming frequency of conjugal infidelity among them in his time; and therefore exhorts them to provide themſelves with a correct edition of the Bible, as I now moſt earneſtly exhort Mr Arrot to do. When he has provided himſelf accordingly, or even has got a correct edition of the Proverbs of Solomon, which may be had ſeparately, he may read the latter part of the ſixth verſe of the twenty-fourth chapter of them, and he will ſoon be convinced that Solomon's maxim, of the truth and juſtneſs of which there can be no doubt, was, that "In the multitude of *counſellors* there is *ſafety*."

The meaning of the maxim is plain. If a multitude of counſellors, or the majority of them, ſhall chance to agree in what is right, there is ſafety to all concerned; to thoſe who conſult together, and to thoſe

thoſe about whom they conſult ; and, by the courteſy of England, and of moſt other countries, the counſellors, in ſuch caſes, though perhaps very undeſervedly, will have the credit of wiſdom. But, on the other hand, if the multitude of counſellors, unanimouſly, or by a majority, go wrong in their advice, which is always poſſible, and generally probable, foraſmuch as wiſe men are very ſeldom the majority of any multitude, and fools are always the moſt noiſy, moſt petulant, and moſt obſtinate, the perſon about whom they conſult may ſee to himſelf as he beſt can ; all his counſellors, at leaſt, are perfectly ſafe, for no one of them can reaſonably be blamed or puniſhed for the judgment and counſel of the reſt.

On this undeniable principle, which, however, it appears that Mr Arrot did not underſtand, when a General has no ſtomach for fighting, and apprehends ſome danger of being caſhiered at leaſt, if not ſomething worſe, if he do not obey his orders, he calls a council of war, the more numerous the better. The multitude of counſellors, of courſe, determines unanimouſly that a living dog is better than a dead lion, which, being the opinion of Solomon, is probably a wiſe one ; but be it wiſe or fooliſh, the General and his multitude of counſellors are juſt as ſafe as if they had been dining with my Lord Mayor, or dancing at court.

Our Sovereign has the good fortune to have more than an hundred privy counſellors, of whoſe wiſdom there can be no doubt. There is alſo perfect ſafety in that number of counſellors ; for in general he conſults with very few of them, perhaps ſix or ſeven at the utmoſt ; and when a greater number of them is conſulted, it is underſtood to be done, not for the ſake of greater wiſdom, but purely for the ſake of that greater ſafety which nothing but a multitude of counſellors can inſure.

The only King, or I believe I may ſay the only perſon, King or Subject, that ever I heard of, who contrived to find not only ſafety but very ſolid advantage to himſelf in a multitude of counſellors, and

alſo

alſo uniform wiſdom in them, was FREDERICK the Great, King of Pruſſia. He was indeed a very extraordinary man, and though not juſt a ſecond Solomon, certainly a very wiſe prince; as plainly appeared by the way in which he ſelected his privy counſellors, and by the uſe which he made of them. It is ſaid he had more privy counſellors (Conſeillers d'Etat) than any Sovereign in Europe, perhaps more than all of them put together: at leaſt it was not his fault if he had not; for he made every body that choſe one of his privy counſellors; I mean, every body that choſe to pay for it; and he took care that no body ſhould have that honour without paying ſwingingly for it. Of courſe, he had complete evidence of the vaſt wiſdom, and the perfect equality of wiſdom, of all his privy counſellors; and as to his own ſafety among ſuch a multitude of counſellors, in addition to that ſecurity which reſulted from their uniform wiſdom, he took a ſtill more deciſive precaution; he never conſulted any of them, ſo that it was literally impoſſible for them to do him any harm. But he had their money, which was juſt what he wanted; and they had *otium cum dignitate*, which was all that they wanted, or that they were fit for; ſo every body was pleaſed. Then, one evident advantage of this admirable ſyſtem was, that five hundred of the greateſt blockheads that ever Germany produced would have ſerved his purpoſe juſt as well, and been really as good privy counſellors to him, as five hundred of the greateſt ſtateſmen and orators that ever puzzled their brains, or ſtrained their throats, in the neighbourhood of Weſtminſter Hall.

Solomon himſelf, if he had lived to ſee ſuch a King, and ſuch a privy council, would have acknowledged for once that there was ſomething new under the ſun; and that, in one caſe at leaſt, in the multitude of counſellors there was wiſdom, as well as ſafety.

If all the hoſt of Surgeons that Edinburgh, or Scotland, or Europe contains, were ambitious of the honourable title of Surgeons to this Infirmary, and were ſo wiſe and liberal as to pay but ten guineas

each for their patents, and were diſcreet enough to be content with the honour, and not to inſiſt on coming there to conſult, and debate, and harangue, and diſpute, and operate, and criticiſe; and were humane enough not to inſiſt on doing miſchief where they could do no good, and to leave the buſineſs to a few of their number, ſelected by the Managers for that purpoſe; they ſhould all have my hearty vote for being Surgeons to the Royal Infirmary, from the day of their baptiſm to that of their death. But as long as they all, young and old, wiſe and fooliſh, drunk and ſober, good, bad, and indifferent, inſiſt upon attending, each in his turn, to have his cut, and all to join in conſultation, and on ſuch occaſions to be taken by tale not by weight, *(numerandi non ponderandi)*, and while the Managers individually could not without horror think of ſuch a tremendous multitude of counſellors for themſelves and their families, I muſt continue to think that the Managers can have no excuſe, and are really guilty of a breach of truſt, if they do not exert themſelves to the utmoſt, in order to avert ſo horrible a calamity from the ſick poor who are entruſted to their care.

I have no doubt that Frederick the Great would with leſs fear have led his troops in perſon to the attack in twenty pitched battles, than he would have truſted his royal perſon to a conſultation of twenty, or even twelve or fourteen Surgeons. I doubt whether Solomon himſelf would have had courage to venture himſelf in ſuch a multitude of ſuch counſellors. Though he was not ſo great a ſoldier, he was a bolder man than Frederick, as appears by his having ventured on ſeven hundred wives, while Frederick would ſcarce venture on one; and I muſt own I regard Solomon's conduct in that reſpect as a proof rather of his high courage than of his ſuperior wiſdom. But no body ſurely ever heard of his having entruſted his perſon to a conſultation of even the ſeventieth part of ſeven hundred Surgeons; nor do I believe that he could have entertained ſuch an irrational thought, even in the delirium of a fever.

If

If ever ſuch a multitude of terrible counſellors was aſſembled about him, I ſhould think it muſt have been done, without his knowledge, by one of his wives, who being tired of the ſeven hundredth part of a huſband, had tried that expedient, a very fair and promiſing one I muſt confeſs, to get rid of it.

To Mr Arrot's unlucky miſtake about that important text which I have thus endeavoured to explain and illuſtrate, not to any malevolent intention towards my honoured preceptor and colleague, I muſt attribute his ſtrange violation of the genuine maxim of Solomon, and the unwarrantable, perhaps even injurious freedom, that he has uſed with the name of Dr Monro. I knew, as well as Mr Arrot did, that Dr Monro was of that conſultation, and that he differed in opinion from me; but I never ſhould have dreamed of mentioning theſe things. It is contrary to the very ſpirit and purpoſe of a conſultation to make any individual anſwerable for the reſult of it, as in this caſe he has moſt unjuſtifiably, I mean without neceſſity and without excuſe, done with reſpect to Dr Monro.

What Dr Monro may ſay to it I know not: probably little or nothing. But I know well what Dr Cullen would have ſaid if it had happened to him; at leaſt what he uſed to ſay when things went wrong, as, for inſtance, when a medicine came up that ſhould have gone down, or a patient grew worſe when he ſhould have grown better, or died when he ſhould have recovered, and, when the novices wondered and lamented, or pretended to wonder and lament: on ſuch occaſions, Dr Cullen, firm as Cato, contented himſelf with ſaying, "*Have we not ſeen Pharſalia?*"

Since the name of Dr Monro has thus, by Mr Arrot, been mentioned in this diſcuſſion, unneceſſarily and improperly as I think, it is right to ſay explicitly, that though I had the misfortune to differ in opinion from him in that caſe, and perhaps have done ſo in a few, I truſt a very few, others; yet if I were myſelf dangerouſly ill, I ſhould be happy to have his profeſſional aſſiſtance, in preference to

that of any Phyſician in the world; of which, I believe, he has had complete evidence long ago. If there was any peculiar difficulty in my caſe, I ſhould be very glad to have a conſultation of two or three Doctors Monro, if ſo many could be found, but not one more, if they were more plenty than Herrings. A conſultation of thirty or forty, nay of twelve or fourteen Doctors Monro, would be too great happineſs for me, even if I had the Plague. One ſuch Doctor, I am ſure, would pay all poſſible attention to the caſe of his patient, and probably would do for him all that could be done; but if he was at a loſs what to do, or diſtruſted his own judgment with reſpect to the employing of a precarious or dangerous remedy, the advice and aſſiſtance of one or two other ſuch Doctors would be all that he or his patient could wiſh, with a view either to confirm his opinion if it was right, or correct it if it was wrong. And two or three ſuch men might reaſonably be expected to attend faithfully to the ſtate of their patient, to be warmly intereſted in his welfare, and even to think themſelves reſponſible for the management of him. But none of theſe things can rationally be expected in a great aſſembly or conſultation, even of ſuch men. Then I am ſure that Dr Monro is too wiſe and good a man ever to diſpute or quarrel with himſelf; and I ſhould expect even that two or three ſuch men in conſultation might agree like brethren. I do not know ſo well what might happen in a congregation of forty ſuch men, eſpecially if they had the misfortune to be united in one corporation of Phyſicians or Surgeons, and, of courſe, were made rivals for fame and fortune, perhaps obliged to ſtrive and ſcramble for their daily bread; and I know well what certainly would happen in a promiſcuous aſſembly of forty ordinary men, Phyſicians or Surgeons, of whom probably thirty taken together might not have the thirtieth part of Dr Monro's knowledge, underſtanding, and worth; while yet each of the thirty might be perfectly ſatisfied with himſelf, and equally convinced of the ignorance, the folly, and the knavery of the majority

jority of his brethren, and all of them exaſperated to the utmoſt by implacable corporation and profeſſional diſputes.

Whenever the Managers of the Infirmary permit or appoint for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital ſuch numerous and ill-aſſorted conſultations, as neither the rich and great, who can well afford to have whatever is beſt for them; nor Phyſicians and Surgeons, who, without expence, may have in that reſpect whatever they wiſh; nor they, if ſick themſelves, would chuſe to have, or could think of without horror, they may be ſure that they are doing wrong.

The well known maxim of a Grecian ſage is fairly applicable on this as on every occaſion: We ought not to ſeek what is greateſt, not even in rank or fortune, but what is beſt; what is moſt ſuitable to us. If a wiſe and good man had occaſion to be clothed himſelf, or charitably to clothe a poor man, he would hardly think of calling a conſultation of a great multitude of Tailors; and ſtill leſs, I preſume, would he deſire a whole Royal College of Tailors to co-operate in making, either for himſelf or for the poor man, the largeſt pair of breeches that they could contrive to make by their united labours. On many occaſions, ſo vaſt a pair of breeches would be worſe than none; and, on all occaſions, the breeches that fitted them beſt, would be the beſt for thoſe who had occaſion to wear them.

REMARKS *on* Mr John Bell's *Anſwer for the Junior Members of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh to my Memorial; for which Anſwer he received the Thanks of that Royal College.*

SCARCE had I written one half of the preceding obſervations on Mr Arrot's Remarks, when I had the pleaſure of hearing (and a very great pleaſure it was to me, far greater even than what I had juſt before received from peruſing Mr John Bell's moſt admirable and

and inimitable pamphlet) that he had received, as I am ſure he well deſerved, the ſolemn thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons for that ineſtimable work. Ineſtimable it really was to me; for it was all that I wanted or wiſhed, and much more than I could have expected from any Member of that learned College, to confirm and illuſtrate, to the full conviction of the Managers and of the public, every thing that I had urged in my Memorial. It was much more acceptable, and more valuable to me, than a vote of thanks to myſelf, or than a Diploma of Honorary Member, unanimouſly conferred on me by that Royal College, would have been. It was infinitely better for my purpoſe, than any thing that I could have imagined, or would have written, if ſuch things had been ſuggeſted to me by men of ſuperior genius; and if Mr John Bell had put his own pen into my hand, and in his own name and that of his brethren, had deſired me to write whatever I pleaſed as an anſwer for them to my argument.

To Mr John Bell, perſonally and privately, I have already expreſſed my gratitude for the entertainment and edification which his work has afforded me. And I now publicly and formally beg that he, and all his brethren who firſt employed him to write that Anſwer to my Memorial, and who have now, by their ſolemn vote of thanks to him, ſanctioned it, and adopted it as their own, will accept my moſt humble and hearty thanks for the honour and favour which they have thus done me, and of which I ſhall now endeavour to prove myſelf not altogether unworthy.

They muſt not conſider theſe expreſſions of gratitude on my part as mere words of courſe, and idle compliments; nor muſt they refer them entirely to the obvious principle, moſt happily and emphatically expreſſed by a popular writer, " That there are men whoſe " praiſe is ſatire, and whoſe approbation is infamy." The ſevereſt cenſures of ſuch men, of courſe, muſt be more than praiſe, and their fouleſt reproaches the moſt unequivocal and honourable teſti-

monials

monials that they can beſtow, and juſt as much to be deſired as *laudari a laudato viro.*

Even in this view, their vote of thanks to Mr John Bell, implying that they approved, adopted, and ſanctioned the ſentiments expreſſed in his pamphlet, with reſpect to me and my Memorial, would no doubt have been highly gratifying to me. But many other conſiderations, ſtill more weighty, contributed, along with that one, to enhance its value in my ſight. Juſt as a bill of exchange, hardly negotiable on the credit of the drawer, when covered by proper indorſements, becomes as good and current as if it were payable to the Sterling Abraham Newland.

If no ſuch public and honourable teſtimony of their approbation, eſteem, and concurrent ſentiments, had been beſtowed by them on Mr John Bell, and his Anſwer to my Memorial; ſtill worſe, if they individually had all diſavowed it, as what they never thought, and had never employed him to write for them, which at one time I had reaſon to fear would have been the caſe, I ſhould have been placed in a very unpleaſant and embarraſſing ſituation. There are many things in it of which I earneſtly wiſhed to take notice, and to avail myſelf, becauſe they appeared to me admirably ſuited to ſerve the cauſe which I had eſpouſed; but I could not, without forfeiting the eſteem and confidence of the Managers, and the good opinion of my beſt friends, have made any remarks on ſuch a work, which ſo many of them had declared to me neither required nor deſerved any notice from me.

I ſhould ſoon have been told that I was an arrant Quixote, attacking a harmleſs Windmill by miſtake for a terrible Giant. There would have been no end to the jokes and ſarcaſms that I muſt have brought on myſelf. But now that the enemy, for want (I preſume) both of Generals and Engineers, has placed his whole force in that windmill, a moſt unmilitary and untenable poſt I ſhould think, and from that poſt has valiantly attacked me on my ſtrongeſt ſide, it

cannot

cannot ſurely be thought Quixotiſm in me to take a view at leaſt of his entrenchments and batteries, and to conſider the plan and manner of his deſperate attack.

To be attacked on one's ſtrongeſt ſide, juſt in the place and in the manner that one would wiſh, is a wonderful and almoſt unexampled piece of good fortune. Any perſon who ſhall fairly conſider it in this point of view, will probably have ſome notion of the pleaſure I felt in reading Mr John Bell's pamphlet, and the ſtill greater pleaſure which I felt when I heard that he had received the thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons for that work. If not, let ſuch a perſon conſider what joy it would give to every friend of his country, to hear that the King of Spain and all his ſubjects had marched in a maſs to attack Gibraltar by ſea and land; or that the Firſt Conſul of France and all his myrmidons had fairly embarked in flat-bottomed boats, and ſailed to fight the Channel fleet and invade England, and he will underſtand perfectly the kind of pleaſure to which I allude. Even in theſe hard times, JOHN BULL himſelf would rejoice to be ſo attacked by his worſt enemies. Ruined as he is by the war, drowned in debt, pillaged with taxes, oppreſſed with grievances, pining (as uſual) with apprehenſions, tormented all day by exciſemen, haunted all night by ſchedules of income-tax longer than his rent-roll, beſet on all hands, devoured by his ſervants, threatened by his foes, bullied by his friends; a hoſt of democrats and reformers, armed with pamphlets, pikes, daggers, and guillotines, in his front; myriads of volunteer infantry, with fixed bayonets, in his rear; vaſt clouds of yeomanry cavalry, ſword in hand, ready to charge him on his right; mountains of volunteer artillery, with lighted portfires, juſt ready to open on his left; growling at the ſcarcity of belly-timber; not half reliſhing the proclamation, and the economy of eatables which it recommends; making endleſs wry faces at the nice pickled herrings which his ſiſter PEG ſends him up twice a-week, juſt by way of a whet; quite deſperate

perate at the rigid economy of malt, and the ſhameful waſte of river-water, which are now practiſed by the brewers; ſeeing no proſpect of any thing before him in this world but death and taxes, and doubtful which to take firſt; even in the midſt of all his calamities, JOHN BULL would chearfully put his hand once more in his almoſt empty pocket, and pay t'other fifty millions, juſt to have the pleaſure of reading a Gazette Extraordinary, containing the account of thoſe two attacks. The pamphlet of Mr John Bell, and the vote of thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons to him for it, were ſuch an attack, and ſuch a Gazette to me. Without metaphor or ſimile, I think it may be well underſtood, that to find Mr John Bell employing againſt me and my Memorial, and the majority of the Royal College of Surgeons approving, and, by their vote of thanks to him, formally ſanctioning and adopting as their own, arguments which ſcarce needed refutation, aſſertions which certainly required no contradiction, and reproaches the moſt virulent, but withal hurtful and diſhonourable only to their authors, could not fail to be gratifying to me. Such conduct, in the firſt place, was very ſufficient proof that they could find nothing better, or more to the purpoſe, to ſay againſt me and my argument; ſo that in this reſpect it was a kind of confirmation, really of more force than a formal acknowledgment, of the validity of all that I had advanced. But, in the ſecond place, it completely removed thoſe reſtraints which, from conſiderations of delicacy to them individually, and to their College as a body corporate, I had impoſed on myſelf, in ſtating, for the ſatisfaction of the public, ſome of the many ſtrong reaſons that the Managers had for wiſhing to get rid of that cruel contract which gave indiſcriminately to every Member of the College of Surgeons the right of attending by rotation in the Royal Infirmary. It not only gave me liberty, but ſtrongly required of me, to ſtate to the public at large ſome more of the evils neceſſarily reſulting from that cruel ſyſtem, and well known by experience to

the Managers, and to the Surgeons, but which I truſted it would have been unneceſſary to have made more generally known.

Still, however, in addition to the ſacred reſtraints of truth and juſtice, I hold myſelf bound in honour, and in duty, as a Manager of the Royal Infirmary, while I reprobate that ſordid bargain which our predeceſſors made with the Surgeons, and give ſtrong additional reaſons for putting an end to the cruel ſyſtem which has reſulted from it, as I truſt will ſoon be done, not to ſtate any minute particulars, in ſuch a manner as may point out any living individuals as blameable, or hurt their fame and fortune; and not to ſtate even the general caſe in ſuch a manner as to make them all, and their profeſſion, and the Hoſpital itſelf, objects of horror to the public. This they have attempted, in my opinion with more zeal than prudence, to do with reſpect to the Clinical Profeſſors, and their practice and lectures. But I conſider the conduct of Mr John Bell and the Surgeons, on this point, as an example only, not as a pattern.

It is right, however, to warn them all, as I did Mr John Bell, privately and perſonally, before his anſwer to my Memorial was written, that if they be not very cautious, they may ſoon and effectually fruſtrate my purpoſe in that kind of reſerve. Many of them muſt already know, and all of them, if they chooſe to take the trouble to enquire, may ſoon learn, from unqueſtionable authority, to what occurrences, and conſequently to what individual Surgeons, I allude. If they will not keep the ſecret as they ought to do, I cannot help it; nor do I care; let them ſee to the conſequences. Their indiſcretion will not injure any man of merit among them, nor will it weaken, on the contrary, it will greatly confirm and illuſtrate, my argument: and if ſome of them ſhall fall into the pit which themſelves have dug, I ſhall ſoon be comforted. *Nec lex ulla juſtior eſt, quam necis artificem arte perire ſua.*

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It is impoſſible that I ſhould have an unfavourable opinion of their Profeſſion; it is impoſſible that I ſhould bear any ill-will to their College in its corporate capacity; it is moſt certain that I bear not the ſmalleſt ill-will to any individual among them; there is not one of them whom I ſhould not be very ſorry to hurt in perſon, fame, or fortune. But to their hateful bargain with the Managers of the Royal Infirmary in 1738,—to their promiſcuous attendance and multitudinous conſultations in it,—and to the arguments or declamation by which they ſtill contend for that bargain, and that mode of attendance in the Hoſpital, I will give no quarter.

It was not, however, purely on the ſelfiſh principle of perſonal gratification to myſelf, nor yet from the conſideration of the great ſervice which it could not fail to do to my cauſe, that I had ſuch pleaſure in hearing of the vote of thanks of the Royal College of Surgeons to Mr John Bell: it was very much on his account; for till I heard of that well-judged and well-merited vote of thanks, "(Happy who thus have power to give, who thus with honour can "receive)," I had reaſon to fear that Mr John Bell would have been placed in a moſt diſtreſſing, and not a very creditable ſituation, which, out of the regard I bear to him, I ſhould have been heartily ſorry for.

From the ſolemn reſolution, and formal requeſt of the Junior Members (that is to ſay, of *ſome* of the Junior Members) of the Royal College of Surgeons, to Mr John Bell, which he has very judiciouſly printed, and prefixed to his Pamphlet, it is plain that he was employed by them to write an anſwer to my Memorial. It is plain alſo that he wrote ſuch an anſwer at their requeſt. But it is not quite ſo plain what is to be underſtood by his own circular letter to them, which he has alſo printed and prefixed to his Pamphlet. In that letter, which is a pretty long one, there are ſome things hard to be underſtood; and many things which, without a key, or at leaſt a good commentary, cannot be underſtood at all.

Talibus ex adyto dictis Cumæa Sibylla
Horrendas canit ambages, antroque remugit,
Obſcuris vera involvens: ea fræna furenti
Concutit, et ſtimulos ſub pectore vertit Apollo.

Indeed the only thing which can be clearly underſtood or inferred from that letter is, that the Pamphlet to which it is prefixed, written by Mr John Bell, had not met with the approbation of the Royal College of Surgeons, and was actually printed without the ſanction, perhaps contrary to the wiſhes, even of that party of the College in whoſe behalf it had been written. But I had no occaſion to rely on ſuch inferences from the obſcure hints and verboſe ambiguous expreſſions of that Sibylline letter. Several days before I ever heard of it, which indeed was not till after the pamphlet ſubjoined to it had been publiſhed, I was informed that ſeveral of that party of the Surgeons who oppoſed the change in the mode of their attendance in the Hoſpital for which I contend, had diſclaimed all ſhare or concern in Mr John Bell's *paullo poſt futurum* production, of which it was generally underſtood that he was actually in hard labour: and two or three days after he was ſafely delivered of it, I had the honour to receive a formal meſſage, from one of the moſt eminent of his partiſans, aſſuring me that he, the gentleman who ſent me the meſſage, had no concern in the Pamphlet.

On conſidering the various intimations of this kind, which, either directly or indirectly, I received ſoon before and ſoon after his Pamphlet appeared, it occurred to me, that his partiſans were reſolved to diſavow Mr John Bell's Pamphlet, juſt out of ſpite to me, in order to deprive me of the pleaſure and the advantage which they foreſaw I muſt have, if they ſanctioned it and adopted it as their own. For I could not ſuppoſe that ſo ſhort a time as had elapſed between the publication of my Memorial, and that of his anſwer to it, ſhould have diſſolved the friendſhip of ſuch men, a friend-

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ſhip founded on the moſt perfect confidence, and a thorough knowledge of one another's talents and virtues.

I thought it poſſible alſo that ſome of them, little acquainted with fine writing, and ſtill leſs with that exquiſite mode of reaſoning which is generally practiſed by lawyers, to the great aſtoniſhment of their ſimple clients, had not perceived the plan and drift of his elaborate work, nor conſequently underſtood the merit of it; or reliſhed the joke, which he intended to practiſe on me.

They probably expected, in pure ſimplicity of heart, when he undertook to anſwer my Memorial for them, that he was gravely to proceed at once to refute the arguments which I had urged; juſt as a common barber would in a trice take off the moſt briſtly beard that could come under his razor. But in this, ſuppoſing that it could have been done eaſily and without delay, there would have been no merit, and no joke at all.

Mr John Bell is a man of too great genius, and underſtands too well what he owes to himſelf and to his employers, as well as what the public expects of him, ever to have thought of proceeding in ſo mechanical and vulgar a manner on this grand occaſion, the fineſt opportunity he ever had, or ever could expect or wiſh to have, of diſplaying to the beſt advantage his ſuperior talents as an operator.

I ſoon diſcovered what kind of operation he intended to perform on me; for I once heard of its being ſucceſsfully performed on a ſimple traveller, who having great occaſion to be trimmed, ſent for the barber of a village where he chanced to ſtop. The knight of the razor ſoon made his appearance, and, with the hand of a maſter, in a trice prepared a mountain of foaming ſuds whiter than Alpine ſnows; then, with moſt perſevering diligence, lathered his patient's face as completely as the viſage of Don Quixote was lathered by the fair Altiſidora; then unfolded his ſhining blade, and ſtrapped it well, with many a flouriſh; and at laſt applied it ſo effectually,

fectually, that in a few ſeconds he ſcraped off all the ſkin, leaving every hair on the chin of the ill-fated traveller as long and ſtrong as it was before. This is juſtly conſidered as the very pink and perfection of maſterly ſhaving, and, when well performed, never fails to excite the aſtoniſhment of the patient, and the admiration and applauſe of every beholder. Mr John Bell, to do him juſtice, has not ſpared his lather, nor his labour, nor his flouriſhes, and, if his razor had had any edge at all, I ſhould certainly have been made a perfect raw head and bloody bones, my beard only, like an impenetrable *abbatis* or *chevaux de frize*, remaining untouched, and as formidable as ever. It might have been left purpoſely to the care of ſome vulgar operator, who knew nothing of the more ſublime parts of his profeſſion, and was fit only for ſuch drudgery.

But, *in magnis voluiſſe ſat eſt :* as it is not in mortals to command ſucceſs, we muſt be content with deſerving it. This the partiſans of Mr John Bell ſeem at laſt, though ſomewhat late, to have diſcovered and felt. Though I cannot compliment them on the generoſity of their conduct, I muſt own they have done him juſtice. To have with-held their thanks and praiſes would have been unjuſt, unkind, and ungrateful in the higheſt degree, after employing him in ſo ungracious and unprofitable a work. Firſt to have uſed him as they ſay a monkey does a cat's paw in roaſting cheſnuts, and then to have driven him out, like a ſcape-goat, into the wilderneſs, loaded with the ſins, and followed by the curſes of a whole people, would have been a ſpecimen of human nature worſe than any we have yet ſeen, not excepting even the conduct of Meſſ. Kennedy and Co. Members of the Corporation of Surgeons in Edinburgh, more than ſixty years ago. But now, by their juſt and candid behaviour to Mr John Bell, in voting their thanks and praiſes for his work, perfect eſteem, and confidence, and friendſhip, are preſerved among them: and long may they continue.

Felices

Felices ter et amplius
Quos irrupta tenet copula : nec malis
Divulſus querimoniis,
Suprema citius ſolvet amor die.

It is proper alſo to mention, in juſtice to Mr John Bell, that he appears in this cauſe not only rather as an advocate than as a party, but even as an advocate againſt his better judgment, and almoſt againſt his conſcience. I mean, that the ſentiments which he has expreſſed ſo fully and vehemently with reſpect to me, and with reſpect to the Royal College of Surgeons as a body, are diametrically oppoſite to thoſe which he entertained, and had openly avowed, and ſtrongly expreſſed, a ſhort time before; and, with reſpect to myſelf, a ſhort time after alſo, nay even at the time, and in the very act of writing that violent Philippic againſt me, which he has been pleaſed to call an Anſwer to my Memorial.

Of the laſt of theſe aſſertions any perſon who has got a copy of his Pamphlet may have complete proof in a moment. Such a perſon, on peruſing it, will perceive, that after reviling me for more than an hundred pages of ſmall print, royal octavo, in a ſtyle equal or ſuperior to any clapper-clawing that ever was performed in the Royal College of Surgeons ; after reproaching me with every thing that is bad, ignorance, falſehood, malevolence, cruelty, hypocriſy ; after repreſenting me as an undutiful, unnatural, degenerate ſon, and an unworthy, ungrateful ſcholar, who endeavoured, by the foulеſt means, to blaſt the character of my deceaſed inſtructor and colleague, Mr John Bell gravely declares, (page 10, ſect. 3.)

" It is time for us to ſay, in favour of one whoſe conduct we " cannot but deſpiſe, that though he may have a light and giddy " head, we are ſure he has an honeſt heart." Then he proceeds for full forty pages more reviling me as bitterly as he had done in the firſt hundred pages of his Pamphlet.

It is evidently impoſſible that any man expreſſing his own real ſentiments ſhould have fallen into ſuch extravagant inconſiſtencies and contradictions. No man who knows what an honeſt heart is, can believe that I have ſuch a heart, (which Mr John Bell ſays he is ſure of), and at the ſame time believe me to be ſuch a horrible monſter as he repreſents me. What then muſt we conceive his real opinion of me to have been at the time when he was writing that Philippic againſt me? for at preſent I am not diſpoſed to admit that he literally does not know what an honeſt heart is, though very probably, for an hundred and fifty pages, he may never once have thought of it.

It ſeems to me moſt probable that his own opinion of me at that time was juſt the ſame that it had been before, and was immediately after, as moſt amply expreſſed by himſelf, when he was free from every reſtraint, and not acting either as the leader, or the advocate, or the tool of a party.

To the beſt of my knowledge, in the laſt twenty years of my life, no one Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, nor all of them put together, have ſaid ſo many kind and flattering things to me, and of me, as Mr John Bell has ſaid.

My library is adorned with copies of his books on anatomy and ſurgery, ſpendidly bound, preſented to me by the author, and either bearing inſcriptions, or accompanied by letters expreſſing his eſteem and reſpect for me. He has done me the honour to mention me in the moſt flattering manner in one of his immortal works, to which his name is not prefixed, but which, I believe, he never diſavowed, and now, if I underſtand him right, fairly acknowledges as his own; indeed, from its inveterate family-likeneſs, there could be no doubt about its parentage. I have had the pleaſure of hearing, on many occaſions, from ſeveral different perſons, that he ſpoke of me *vivâ voce* in the ſame favourable manner. In ſhort, without vanity, I believe that few men, if any, of my profeſſion,

or

or of any profeſſion, had the good fortune to poſſeſs a larger ſhare of his eſteem and good-will than myſelf; and I doubt much whether any perſon ever yet enjoyed that good fortune nearly ſo long as I have done.

Even juſt after my Memorial was diſtributed, and before Mr John Bell had been tempted by the Foe of mankind to "follow a "multitude to do evil," he did me the honour to addreſs to me a very long card on the ſubject of my Memorial, expreſſing ſentiments, and an avowed reſolution with reſpect to his future conduct in the buſineſs, which I thought, and ſtill think, do him very great credit. Accordingly, in my anſwer to that card, I endeavoured with all my might to confirm thoſe good ſentiments in him; and as I perceived, from ſome hints in his card, that there was a riſk of my Paper being miſunderſtood or miſrepreſented, I took much pains to obviate all ſuch miſtakes, real or pretended, with reſpect to it. I am ſure I ſaid much more than enough to have convinced him, or any perſon not abſolutely determined not to be convinced, (which is always the caſe with party-men), that my Memorial was a perfectly harmleſs and benevolent work, written in the diſcharge of my public duty and truſt.

But I think it beſt to let our correſpondence ſpeak for itſelf. Part of his ſhare of it does him very great honour, by ſhewing what his own ſentiments and intentions were; and the other part of his ſhare of it ſhews how he was prevailed on to change thoſe juſt ſentiments, and depart from his original good reſolution. My ſhare of the correſpondence will at leaſt ſhew what pains I took to keep him or to ſet him right, and to prevent ſuch an exploſion as we have lately ſeen.

N° I.

Mr Bell preſents compliments to Dr Gregory; has received an addreſs from Dr Gregory to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, on a ſubject in which it would be affectation in Mr Bell to ſay he had not a very particular intereſt.

From the moment in which Mr Bell heard of this Addreſs, he reſolved to take no ſelfiſh ſtep which might interrupt any charitable purpoſe, or give trouble to a ſet of gentlemen who have now to conduct a buſineſs peculiarly difficult and delicate, where the moſt ſuperficial obſerver may foreſee a contention of intereſts and paſſions very afflicting to the Managers, who, when a queſtion of this nature is brought before them, muſt decide. Mr Bell from the firſt reſolved to wait the deciſion of the Managers, which he has no doubt will be honourable and impartial, tending only to the public good.

On every occaſion of this nature, a man who is unavoidably intereſted muſt feel a degree of uneaſineſs till he have reſolved what line of conduct to purſue. Mr Bell has reflected on this ſubject of debate with no ſmall anxiety, and finds reaſon to be contented with the reſolution he at firſt formed, and to abide by it, as moſt modeſt and becoming a gentleman, and as eſpecially proper in a profeſſional man, who ſhould ſeek promotion and ſucceſs in the world rather by his honeſt diligence and private labours, than by cabal and ſolicitation. In this reſolved ſtate of mind, he was naturally ſurpriſed, and ſomewhat offended, to hear it reported that he was expected to anſwer Dr Gregory's Memorial; and it is to explain his ſentiments on this ſubject that he troubles Dr Gregory with this long card.

Mr Bell has not opened this Addreſs. He cannot ſuppoſe it poſſible for Dr Gregory to mix any private conſiderations with a public queſtion ſo important as this; and Mr Bell is perſuaded, that whatever

ever Dr Gregory may have ſaid of the conduct of one particular department in the Royal Infirmary, he will never forſake ſo far the dignity of his ſtation as to ſay any thing inſulting to the profeſſion, or dangerous to any individual. Such things could never enter into a Memorial addreſſed by a man of talents to a reſpectable and public body. Mr Bell having no perſonal fear, can the more freely ſay to Dr Gregory, that, from his former conduct, Mr Bell has reaſon to expect every thing liberal, fair, and honourable.

Mr Bell takes this opportunity of aſſuring Dr Gregory, that whatever may be the reports of idle or buſy people, he can imagine no poſſible motive, on his part, for anſwering a Memorial which has in view an object ſo charitable and praiſe-worthy as that of conducting to the beſt advantage the only Hoſpital in this great city. Nothing could engage Mr Bell in any public diſpute, nor be an apology to himſelf for writing any pamphlet or memorial, except the ſincere hope of being uſeful, or the neceſſary duty of ſelf-defence. And if it were poſſible that, in regard to the adminiſtration of the Royal Infirmary, and his public duties there, he were forced to reply to any public charge, it muſt be of a nature which would involve his reputation, and very exiſtence as a profeſſional man. But Dr Gregory is too ſenſible of all this to do any thing ungenerous; and Mr Bell is too ſeriouſly impreſſed with the ſerious conſequences of any ſuch imputation, either to diſregard the ſlighteſt accuſation, or to enter unpremeditately or raſhly upon a public vindication. The ſtep which is to give a colour to a man's future life and reputation, which is to enlarge or take away his opportunities of being uſeful in his public profeſſion, may well admit of deliberate reflection.

Mr Bell will not pay Dr Gregory ſo poor a compliment as to neglect reading what he is pleaſed to publiſh; but, without being wanting in every proper and decent attention to his character, ſtation, and future expectations in life, he will wait compoſedly the

× iſſue of this buſineſs, by which alone the deſign of this Addreſs can be judged of. If Dr Gregory have in this buſineſs nothing but the intereſts of humanity in view, his Memorial will contain in it
× nothing of partiality or party-ſpirit, and it muſt carry along with it the approbation of every good and well-diſpoſed man.

N° 9. *George's Street.*

N° II.

Lanerk, Thurſday Evening, 14th Auguſt 1800.

DEAR SIR,

I was gone from Edinburgh before your card came to my houſe. It was ſent after me. It is ſo intereſting to me, and in my opinion ſo honourable to yourſelf, that I have been anxious to anſwer it fully, and in the way that I think will be moſt completely ſatisfactory to you and all your profeſſional brethren. This has inſenſibly led me into ſome pretty long diſcuſſions, ſo that my letter, begun four days ago at Dumfries Houſe, is not yet finiſhed, though in my clumſy hand-writing it looks already almoſt like a little Memorial. I muſt be back in Edinburgh on Sunday, or Monday morning at fartheſt; then, or ſooner, if I can get it finiſhed ſooner, my letter ſhall wait on you. In the mean time, I give you this intimation, that you may not ſuppoſe, from my delay in anſwering your card, that I am inſenſible or unworthy of thoſe expreſſions of eſteem which it contains, or of the confidence which you have had the goodneſs to put in me.

I have much pleaſure in thinking that a great part of my letter muſt already be anticipated by your own peruſal of my Memorial; and, in particular, that you muſt have found it juſt the reverſe of what you had heard ſurmiſed with reſpect to any ſuppoſed inſults

on

on your profeſſion. But I can eaſily gueſs how an imperfect or ſuperficial reading of it may have led to that miſtake.

I am your obliged and moſt obedient ſervant,

J. Gregory.

To Mr John Bell, Surgeon in Edinburgh.

N° III.

Mr Bell preſents compliments to Dr Gregory; has received the Doctor's card, and alſo the papers which he had the politeneſs to promiſe, and the good humour to deſcribe as a little Memorial.

No one would be more happy than Mr Bell to allow Dr Gregory all poſſible applauſe for the humane motives which firſt diſpoſed him to enter upon this buſineſs, and for his generous intentions all along; but, moſt unhappily, Dr Gregory has, in the fervour of compoſition, or in the hurry of important duties, partly ſacrificed to this important object, ſaid many things which the Doctor's natural candour will incline him to acknowledge are unjuſtly ſevere, and far from being uſeful to his cauſe.

The young Surgeons, in danger of being excluded from thoſe duties which they believed they were employed in performing with humanity, diligence, and at leaſt the ordinary degree of ſkill, and finding in Dr Gregory's Memorial nothing of that reſpect or delicacy which their common profeſſion and the inſeparable character of gentlemen entitled them to expect, have reſolved to anſwer Dr Gregory's Memorial, and have requeſted Mr Bell to take his ſhare in the labour.

Mr Bell would think himſelf very unworthy of the honourable ſervice they have aſſigned him, of conveying their ſentiments to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, if he did not partake of their feelings.

feelings. Yet he hopes to perform his appointed taſk with that
× delicacy towards Dr Gregory and his profeſſion which, it is to be lamented, was quite forgotten when Surgery and Surgeons were made the public jeſt of every light head and unfeeling heart; and
× with that ſerioufneſs alſo which becomes young men anxious about their profeſſional reputation, and appealing to a body of men ſo reſpectable and diſintereſted as the Managers of the Royal Infirmary. But Dr Gregory knows how to make allowance for whatever expreſſions may chance to be uſed in a pamphlet, not of aggreſſion, nor of recrimination even, but of reply merely. Perſonal invective is by no means the moſt perſuaſive manner of writing, it
× is a thriftleſs trade, " C'eſt un mechant métier que celui de " médire."

This arrangement, which has taken place ſince Dr Gregory left town, Mr Bell would be ſorry to have him a moment unacquainted with. And, without the rudeneſs of returning the papers deſigned for Mr Bell as a private gentleman, he hopes Dr Gregory will have the goodneſs to reflect on the peculiar delicacies of his ſituation, and will judge for him, whether it were at all proper that he ſhould touch the ſeals of thoſe papers. He is ſorry that he ſhould have even a doubt about the propriety of reading any papers which Dr Gregory has been ſo condeſcending as to write on the occaſion.

N° 9. *George's Street, Tueſday Evening.*

N° IV.

St Andrew's Square, Wedneſday Morning, 20th Auguſt 1800.

DEAR SIR,

I LOSE not a moment to acknowledge the receipt of your ſecond very polite card.

I am very ſenſible of the liberality and delicacy of your conduct to me, in offering to return me the papers which I ſent you yeſterday without touching the ſeals of them; but you muſt be equally ſenſible, that for me to accept that very handſome offer on your part would be altogether wrong. It would expoſe me to the moſt unfavourable ſuſpicions; ſuch as I cannot chuſe to incur, even though knowing them to be unjuſt, I cannot fear them.

I think it right to preclude even the poſſibility of ſuch ſuſpicions; the more ſo as I underſtand, from ſome hints which you kindly gave me in your former card, that ſome doubts were entertained about the propriety of my conduct, and even ſome ſuſpicions of the purity of my motives in printing the Memorial which you have ſeen.

There is nothing in the papers, which at preſent you have in your poſſeſſion with the ſeals unbroken, but what you have a right to know, and what I ſhould wiſh you to know, even though you are now to be my opponent inſtead of my friend and ally, as, from your former card, I hoped to have found you. But I do not blame you for changing your mind. It is commonly ſaid that ſecond thoughts are beſt; I hope yours will be ſo. I am ſure I ſhall have much pleaſure and edification in reading any anſwer to my Memorial which is written wholly or partly by you.

There is nothing in my written papers which you received yeſterday but what you are welcome to ſhew to any of your friends or profeſſional brethren, eſpecially now that they have reſolved to anſwer my printed paper. I ſhould even wiſh you to ſhew my written paper to them all. There are ſome things in it which it may be of real conſequence to them to know, even with a view to anſwer my Memorial. But obſerve, thoſe papers were written haſtily and by ſtarts, chiefly at inns on my return to Edinburgh; and that you have them as they were firſt written, with all, or almoſt all their errors and inaccuracies on their head; they were

written

written with the negligence and freedom of one gentleman writing privately and confidentially to another; ſo I proteſt againſt all remarks on grammatical or verbal inaccuracies, words wanting, or twice written, or miſplaced or miſ-ſpelled, &c. As to the ſubſtance of what is written, you and your friends are moſt heartily welcome to uſe all manner of freedom; juſt as much as with my printed paper.

Though we are now to be opponents, I ſee no reaſon why we ſhould be enemies; may I therefore beg a favour of you and your brethren? If you have no good reaſon to the contrary, I wiſh you would print your anſwer in quarto, and of the ſame ſize with my Memorial, that they may be conveniently bound up together; and if ever I have occaſion to reply to you, I ſhall do the ſame.

I am, dear Sir, your obliged and moſt obedient ſervant,

J. Gregory.

Mr John Bell's obliging offer of ſending me back my papers with the ſeal untouched would have completely fruſtrated my purpoſe in writing them; and if I had accepted his offer, it would not have anſwered the purpoſe for which he made it. The papers in queſtion, being too bulky to be *folded*, were *rolled* up, and the cover of the roll, to the beſt of my remembrance, was ſealed at the ſide only; ſo that the incloſed papers might eaſily have been taken out at either end of the cover, and might have been read by fifty people, and might have been replaced *in ſtatu quo*, without ever touching the ſeal.

Of the copy of that letter which I have kept, but a very ſmall part was written by myſelf; the whole of it was written very haſtily; and no part of it was compared with the original. On reading it over, with a view to print it, I find that ſeveral words are a wanting,

a wanting, others miſplaced, and others miſtaken. Theſe accidental errors I have endeavoured to correct in printing it, to the beſt of my remembrance. If there be, in the following copy of it, any deviation from the original in the hands of Mr John Bell, it is not intended, and it can be of no conſequence.

N° V.

Dear Sir,

I employ the firſt hour I could command to anſwer your very intereſting card. I truſt you know already that I was gone out of town before you ſent it to my houſe. If I had been at home when it came to my houſe I ſhould have anſwered it immediately, and ſhould have loſt no time in communicating it to the ſeveral Managers of the Royal Infirmary, to whom I am ſure it will give, as it has given to me, very great pleaſure. I ſhall not fail to communicate it to them as ſoon as I return to Edinburgh, which, unleſs I am prevented by ſome unforeſeen accident, will be in a week from this time.

This, independently of the gratification which I know it will be to all of them, I ſhould think it my duty to do in juſtice to you. I am heartily glad that you have been the firſt to expreſs ſo openly and ſo ſtrongly thoſe juſt and liberal ſentiments which your card to me contains, and which I muſt take the liberty to ſay, do you very great credit.

Do not ſuppoſe from this that I am ſurpriſed at your acting wiſely and honourably on this occaſion, or that I expected you to have acted otherwiſe. You will have ſeen before this time, by my Memorial itſelf, that I had little or no apprehenſion of meeting with any different ſentiments or conduct from any individual of your

College. My fears were limited to the chance, and that a very ſmall one, of your College as a body-corporate acting on principles very different from thoſe which any gentleman acting for himſelf perſonally could avow, or even be ſuppoſed to entertain.

I am ſenſible that it was not altogether civil in me, or reſpectful to your College, to ſtate ſuch a ſuppoſition with reſpect to its conduct even in its corporate capacity. But none of you individually, nor your College in general, can ſeriouſly take amiſs my conduct in that reſpect, if you but do me the juſtice to obſerve, that the unfavourable ſuppoſition to which I allude was eſſential to my argument, not as a thing to be believed, but only to be ſtated and conſidered; that I ſtated it with the greateſt diffidence, and with a proper apology for the liberty I took; and further, if you conſider that thoſe very illiberal ſentiments which I could not believe any of you entertained at preſent, had been entertained and avowed as the principles of action of many of your College little more than ſixty years ago; and as I have ſtrong reaſon to ſuſpect much more lately, when, for two, or three, or four years together, the mode of attendance of the Surgeons in the Infirmary was a ſubject of keen conteſt between your College and the Managers.

I am ſure you will have great pleaſure in obſerving the contraſt between the liberal and honourable ſentiments ſo well expreſſed in your card to me, and thoſe ſo much the oppoſite of them, that I can find no decent words to expreſs them, which you ſee avowed in the Surgeons Memorial of 1737. I preſume that wonderful production was as new, and if not too diſguſting, would be as entertaining to you as I have hitherto found it to all your brethren with whom I have converſed about it.—I *preſume*, for, not having ſeen the particulars in our minutes, I cannot pronounce with certainty, that you will have equal pleaſure, and equal cauſe for honeſt pride and ſelf-approbation, when you compare the ſentiments expreſſed in your card to me, with thoſe which influenced the Surgeons in their

their long conteſt with the Managers between thirty and thirty-five years ago, the particulars of which you will find in the minutes of your own College.

I do not wonder that at firſt, and eſpecially before you read my paper, you ſhould think, that " the moſt ſuperficial obſerver may " foreſee a contention of intereſts and paſſions very afflicting to the " Managers." I confeſs I thought ſo myſelf at firſt: but on conſidering the ſubject more deeply, I found ſtrong reaſons to hope more favourably of the reſult of the diſcuſſion; as, I truſt, you will do very ſoon. Certainly your card to me has greatly ſtrengthened theſe hopes.

As you have dealt ſo liberally and ſo frankly with me on this ſubject, I ſhall be as frank with you, and tell you plainly my view of it, and my reaſons for thinking that your own very honourable conduct, and thoſe ſentiments which you have expreſſed in your card to me, will have a great and happy influence in the buſineſs. You will, I hope, in the firſt place, excuſe me when I take the liberty to tell you, that I do not think you ſufficiently cool or impartial to judge fairly what the ſentiments and conduct of many of your profeſſional brethren will be on this occaſion: I mean, of thoſe eſpecially from whom you have differed in profeſſional and corporation diſputes.

Of the particulars and even the ſubjects of theſe diſputes, I know little or nothing, and I do not wiſh to know any thing; for I am not qualified to judge of them, and I have no right and no wiſh to interfere in them. But I have ſo often heard that there are many keen diſputes in your College, and that you take a very active part in them, that I can have no doubt of either of theſe facts. On the ſame general and vague *authority*, (if ſuch it may be called), I underſtand that you, by your talents and activity, have acquired a great aſcendancy among your profeſſional brethren, and are regarded as the great leader of one party among them.

You may judge how ſtrictly I have adhered to my avowed principle, never to meddle with any of your profeſſional or corporation diſputes, when I aſſure you moſt ſolemnly, that I do not know, nor can I gueſs, who is the leader of the oppoſite party in your College. As little do I know who and who are together on either ſide, or what are the ſubjects of your contentions. Theſe are things into which I never enquired, and of which I never chanced to be informed. But, without any information, I can eaſily judge with confidence, that it is not of your own friends and adherents that you expect ſentiments and conduct quite different from your own, and juſt the reverſe of what you judge to be moſt wiſe, liberal, and honourable. You cannot think your own friends ſuch knaves and fools. Then you may reaſonably expect that your own arguments, and even your example, will have great weight with them. It muſt be from the oppoſite party in your College that you expect ſuch irrational and illiberal conduct.

In this reſpect, I hope and truſt you do them injuſtice. It is natural, and almoſt unavoidable, for a perſon keenly engaged in diſputes, to think too unfavourably of the underſtanding and morals of his adverſaries. A perſon totally unintereſted in ſuch diſputes, will not readily fall into the ſame error, and certainly he can have no excuſe for doing ſo. For example, if your adverſaries in the College of Surgeons had told me that you and your friends were ſuch a parcel of knaves, and fools, and Shylocks, that you would pay no regard to any rational, liberal, or honourable conſiderations, but would each inſiſt on cutting his pound of fleſh from the breaſt of ſome miſerable patient whom the bargain with the Managers had made the debtor of your College, I could not have believed them; nor probably ſhould I have met with any credit, either in point of underſtanding or veracity, if I had profeſſed to believe them.

You

You muſt excuſe me, therefore, when I tell you frankly, that I can as little admit, or expect any credit if I ſhould pretend to admit, your ſuppoſition with reſpect to ſome of your profeſſional brethren, and that diſtreſſing conflict of paſſions and intereſts which you dread.

It is evidently impoſſible that in ſo numerous a body as the College of Surgeons, all the individuals ſhall be of the ſame character, or of equal, or nearly equal underſtanding and knowledge. This obvious conſideration is of itſelf a concluſive argument againſt their promiſcuous attendance and conſultations in the Infirmary. From your intimate acquaintance with many perſons, and tranſactions, totally unknown to me, you may have good reaſon to believe that ſeveral of your profeſſional brethren are very different from you in point of character, and much inferior to you in underſtanding and knowledge. But I can ſcarce think you entitled to deem ſo meanly of any of them, as to ſuppoſe that they will act differently from you on this intereſting occaſion; or attempt to make any kind of conteſt with the Managers, inſtead of leaving the buſineſs to their conſideration, and abiding by their deciſion, as you very wiſely and honourably have reſolved to do.

I muſt repeat what I have ſaid in my Memorial, that nothing leſs than actual experience of the fact can ever make me believe ſuch ſentiments and ſuch conduct *poſſible*. When probably a great majority of your College, and certainly many individuals of it, highly reſpectable for their character, their talents, and their knowledge, think and act as you do, can any of your brethren be ſuch blockheads, as not to perceive at once what the conſequences of the oppoſite conduct on their part muſt be to themſelves, in public eſtimation, that is, in fame and fortune, for the reſt of their lives? Their conduct and ſentiments muſt ſoon be publicly known; for thoſe who acted differently neither would nor could keep them ſecret.

The

The public at large cannot judge properly of the *minutiæ* of our profeſſional diſputes, and has ſo often been plagued and ſurfeited with them, as generally to regard them with contempt and diſguſt: ſometimes with perfect abhorrence. But the ſame public can judge eaſily and infallibly, on the principles of common ſenſe and common honeſty, *who* act wiſely, liberally, and honourably, and *who* act ſelfiſhly, ſordidly, and unfeelingly, on the general point at preſent in queſtion. Would any of your brethren wiſh to ſee a diſtinction eſtabliſhed among the Members of your College into the Gentlemen and the Shylocks? Would any of them like to be claſſed with the Shylocks, and to fare accordingly for the reſt of his life? If you think ſo unfavourably of any of them as to ſuppoſe, that either they do not ſee this conſequence, or ſeeing it plainly would diſregard it, I wiſh you would fairly try the experiment on them, and aſk them the queſtion; the more publicly the better. Call their attention to the correſponding occurrence in the College of Phyſicians fifty years ago. Aſk them what they would have thought, or what they ſuppoſe the public would have thought of our Royal College, if we had diſputed the point with the Managers, and inſiſted on our right, as unqueſtionably eſtabliſhed by the charter of the Infirmary? Our College, to its very great honour, was unanimous and cheerful on that occaſion. But if the caſe had been otherwiſe, if it had been carried only by a ſmall majority, what would your brethren think, or what would the public have thought, of the minority of the Phyſicians? Nay, if thoſe who were for conteſting the point with the Managers had proved the majority in our College, and had ſucceeded in their conteſt with the Managers, what would the public have thought of them and their diſgraceful victory? Whatever you, or your profeſſional brethren, or the public, would have thought of ſuch Phyſicians, we Phyſicians, and what is more to the purpoſe on this occaſion, the public too, muſt infallibly think of any Surgeons who at preſent

ſhall

ſhall act, as I have for the ſake of argument and illuſtration *ſuppoſed* ſome of the Phyſicians to have done.

I preſume I need not point out to you, but if you pleaſe, you may point it out to any of your own brethren who you think do not perceive it, that they collectively, and chiefly the moſt eminent and beſt employed of them, can do nothing ſo much for the pecuniary intereſt of the Phyſicians, as to engage in ſuch a conflict of intereſts and paſſions with the Managers as you dread, and very wiſely, as well as honourably, have reſolved to decline. Whatever degrades them, either collectively or individually, in the eſtimation of the public, muſt tend greatly, and almoſt in the ſame proportion, to raiſe us, whoſe conduct in the ſame circumſtances was ſo different. You know as well as I do, probably much better, what kind of rivalſhip there is between the Surgeons and Phyſicians; and that though we never interfere in what is properly your province as Surgeons and Apothecaries, you interfere moſt notoriouſly and greatly in ours, and do more than three fourths of what ſhould be done in point of practice by the Phyſicians. I cannot pay my own brethren ſo ſcurvy a compliment, as to believe that any of them would be gratified by ſeeing any of yours act in that unworthy manner which you are afraid of, or ſhould wiſh them to do ſo for the ſake of the profeſſional *loſs* of fame and fortune *to them*, and conſequently *gain to us*, that would neceſſarily reſult from ſuch conduct on their part. But I have ſomewhere read, that in the misfortunes of our beſt friends, we generally find ſomething that is not diſagreeable: and I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that if the worſt that can be foreſeen or ſuppoſed, ſhould happen to your College, in conſequence of the conduct which you dread in ſome of your brethren, mine would ſoon be comforted; and that even from the beginning of the conflict they would exult in the ſuperior wiſdom, and liberality, and more honourable conduct of our predeceſſors on a ſimilar occaſion.

In

In another point of view, and more particularly, let us conſider what thoſe paſſions and intereſts *can poſſibly be*, the conflict of which appears to you ſo formidable.

On the part of the Managers, there *can be no* paſſion, no intereſt, no motive of any kind, but honeſt zeal for the good of the ſick poor. Their conduct at the firſt eſtabliſhment of this Infirmary, their long ſtruggles with the Surgeons ſoon after, and again more than thirty years ago, the nature of the thing itſelf, the practice on the ſame point in numberleſs other Hoſpitals, all concur to preclude the ſuppoſition of any improper paſſion, or any ſiniſter motive in them. As to pecuniary intereſt, the conſideration of it, if it were to be attended to, (which it ought not to be in this caſe, in which an object of infinitely higher value is at ſtake), would be ſtrongly in favour of the preſent ſyſtem, and againſt ſuch a change as I conceive to be neceſſary. For this implies in the firſt place, the refunding of L. 500, paid by your corporation to the managers, to bring about that cruel bargain. But this is the leaſt of it. The eſtabliſhment of two or three ordinary attending Surgeons, with even very moderate ſalaries, as I propoſe, implies a conſiderable annual expence to the Hoſpital. I know not exactly what; probably not leſs than L. 100, nor more than L. 200 per annum, (for very obvious reaſons). We ſhall ſuppoſe it L. 150 per annum. The value of this at twenty year's purchaſe, is L. 3000. The whole expence to the Infirmary may be L. 3500 or more. If it were twice as much, I ſhould think it well beſtowed. Whatever in this reſpect is the pecuniary expence or loſs to the Hoſpital, is evidently the pecuniary gain of your College. Your brethren, therefore, have a very ſtrong intereſt in this point of view, to concur with the Managers in the change which I propoſe, and none to ſtrive againſt it.

As to any other *intereſt*, real or ſuppoſed, which your brethren may have, or think they have, in the ſyſtem of promiſcuous attendance by rotation, on the principle of acquiring improvement, by practiſing

practiſing in the Infirmary, though at the riſk or at the expence of the miſerable patients, I have in my Memorial diſcuſſed it as fully, and ſtrictly, and calmly, as if there had been nothing in it contrary to juſtice and humanity, or even to common ſenſe. As my argument on that point is *bona fide* ſimple mathematical demonſtration, and little elſe than eaſy arithmetical calculation, I truſt it muſt have convinced you and all your brethren, that in a numerous College like yours, that ſuppoſed intereſt and improvement is *next to nothing*, and abſolutely contemptible, certainly not equal in four and twenty years to what the youngeſt member of your College would acquire in *one* year's permanent attendance. If there be any error in my argument on that point, (or my ſuppoſed mathematical demonſtration), it muſt be eaſy to point it out, and impoſſible to diſpute about it.

In the mean time, I cannot think it neceſſary to make any addition to it but *one*, and this one is very ſhort; and though no doubt uſeleſs to a man of your talents, perhaps not quite ſuperfluous to ſome of your brethren, who are leſs accuſtomed than you are to follow a chain of reaſoning. I wiſh it to be obſerved, and I ought to have ſtated in my Memorial, that the ſuppoſed improvement acquired by the Surgeons attending promiſcuouſly in rotation, is in the *inverſe proportion* of the wrong done to the poor patients: that is, the more the patients are expoſed to ſuffer, or actually do ſuffer, the leſs improvement do the Surgeons acquire by their attendance in that manner; and conſequently the *leſs intereſt* (for any *right* of theirs in law or equity to attend in that way I hope I have ſhewn to be not only an abſurdity, but an atrocity and an outrage on human nature) can they have in the continuance of ſuch a ſyſtem. For example, if two or three Surgeons were really needed to do the Hoſpital duty to the beſt advantage, and were permanently appointed to it accordingly; and if there were but two or three more Surgeons in the town; and if theſe were, as in

candour we muſt ſuppoſe them, as well qualified by nature and education as the others, they would have a great intereſt in being permitted to attend in the Hoſpital, as well as the two or three who were really needed for it. They would ſoon acquire great improvement by their attendance in the Hoſpital, and of courſe the wrong to the poor patients would be ſmall, and it would be tranſient. On the other hand, ſtill ſuppoſing the number really needed to be but two or three, if the number of Surgeons in the town were 25, or 50, or 100, or 200, and all ſhould wiſh to attend in rotation, the improvement acquired by each individual by attending for two months once in 4, 8, 16, or 32 years, would be *very ſmall*, and the cruel wrong to the patients *very great*. Whenever the time of attendance, multiplied by the number of Surgeons who chuſe to attend in rotation, comes to be equal to the average duration of human life, after the age at which men on the average become Members of your College, then the improvement of each individual, as attending once only in his life, and this for a ſhort period, becomes the leaſt poſſible, or almoſt nothing; and the evil to the poor patients becomes the greateſt that neceſſarily reſults from the ſyſtem of rotation, or, as it would then be, the ſyſtem of *conſtant ſucceſſion* of the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced Surgeons.

The ſyſtem of rotation, even according to the preſent numbers of your College, which I underſtand to be annually increaſing, approaches very near to that little or no improvement of the Surgeons by their ſhort periods of attendance at long intervals; and for two or three years together, it is juſt as great an evil to the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, as if the ſame Surgeons were never again to attend in it.

Theſe things are undeniable, I think, and almoſt obvious. But if you find that any of your brethren are not aware of them, I beg you will ſuggeſt them to their ſerious conſideration. The importance of attending to them, with a view to prevent any troubleſome

ſome litigation, conſiſts in this, that where there is *no intereſt* there can be *no right.* This I underſtand to be a ſettled principle of law, as well as of equity and common ſenſe. It is well exemplified in the common queſtions about inſurance on ſhips, houſes, goods, or lives. Whatever loſs may happen, a perſon inſuring cannot recover from the underwriters, unleſs he can ſhew his intereſt in the perſon or thing inſured. It is not that any the greateſt intereſt can of itſelf conſtitute a right, but that a right cannot be conſtituted or maintained without ſome ſpecific intereſt.

As to the *paſſions* to which you allude as likely to produce a diſtreſſing conflict, (diſtreſſing to the Managers), after the moſt mature conſideration, I can think of none which it would not be both an injury and an indignity to the Members of your College to impute to them, either collectively or individually. You ſee by the Surgeons Memorial 1737, what hateful paſſions, envy, malice, and ſordid avarice, actuated Meſſ. Kennedy & Co. in their conteſt with the Managers at that time. Or if any additional commentary is wanted on their Memorial and their conduct, you have it in the name of *Alexander Monro*, the father of the preſent Profeſſor, and of our Medical School. He was the firſt, and I believe the principal Surgeon, permanently appointed by the Managers; and ſo far as I can perceive, either by our minutes or the Surgeons Memorial, it was the appointment of him, and of a few other men of merit, evidently the beſt thing that the Managers could have done for the ſick poor, which gave ſuch an alarm to Meſſ. Kennedy and his aſſociates, and rouſed them to ſuch extraordinary exertions of Chriſtian charity and brotherly love, as produced the Memorial which I have had the honour to analyſe, and that ſhameful and cruel bargain which I ſo ſtrongly reprobate. At leaſt, it cannot be ſaid that Dr Monro was *the greateſt Dunce* among the Surgeons, and that by his appointment he was likely to *run away with undeſerved fame.*

Of ſuch unworthy paſſions, and of any conflict which they may excite, the Managers can have no fear. The wiſeſt and the moſt fooliſh, (not under the immediate influence of them), muſt foreſee alike what regard will be paid to them, and to any conteſt proceeding from them, either by the public, or in a court of juſtice. In the preſent ſtate of the buſineſs, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that ſuch a conflict of intereſts and paſſions as you ſeem to dread, far from being matter of affliction to the Managers, would be a ſubject of amuſement and mirth, and really of triumph to them, as well as to the Phyſicians, and to many of your own profeſſional brethren, who it is plain will be the firſt to profit by it, even from the day on which it begins. It was my object in my Memorial, and, to tell you the truth, it is my object in this long letter to you, which is, as you may ſee, a kind of ſupplemental Memorial, to prevent ſuch a diſgraceful conflict. This I ſhould earneſtly have wiſhed to do, if I could, even for the ſake of your College and your profeſſion, to which I aſſure you I wiſh no evil. But more eſpecially I wiſhed, as it was my duty, if poſſible, to prevent ſuch a conflict for the ſake of the Hoſpital: Not for fear or any doubts of the ultimate iſſue of it; for of this I was well aſſured before my Memorial went to the preſs: Not for fear of any blame or diſcredit which it can bring on the Managers; for the attempt, even if it could be unſucceſsful, muſt ſtill be greatly to our credit, as you cannot fail to perceive: Not for fear of any evil to the ſick poor from ſuch a conflict; for *they* have every thing to gain, and nothing to loſe by it. They may be better, and they can be no worſe taken care of, than they are according to the preſent ſyſtem. I tell you honeſtly, that I wiſhed to prevent ſuch a conflict, and took upon myſelf the trouble and expence of that Memorial which you have ſeen, for no other reaſon, but juſt to ſave the Infirmary the expence of litigation with your College, which, if conducted in the way that lawſuits too often are, and perhaps

perhaps carried to the Houſe of Peers, might very probably coſt the Hoſpital L. 500. This expence, if incurred without neceſſity, I ſhould think would be paying rather too dear for the malicious joke of ſeeing your College hunted by the beſt pack of lawyers in the kingdom, through all the courts of juſtice in it. But ſuppoſing the worſt, as I always do in ſuch doubtful caſes, that L. 500 of the Infirmary's money muſt be ſpent on law, ſtill it would be no worſe than if we had to pay your College L. 1000 inſtead of L. 500, on refunding the money, *(the bribe)*, which our predeceſſors got from yours more than ſixty years ago. The Managers, I have good reaſon to believe, are now thoroughly convinced that L. 500, or L. 1000, ought not to be put in competition with the eſſential good of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital. If you know of any paſſions leſs hateful, and more avowable, than thoſe to which I allude, and ſuch as, without an *inſult* to your profeſſional brethren, you may *ſuppoſe* to excite them to a conflict with the Managers on this occaſion, I wiſh you, who are not yourſelf under the influence of them, would ſtate preciſely what they are. I am confident they would meet with the moſt candid and patient attention from the Managers.

Your ſentiments and reſolutions being what you have ſo honourably and ſo fully ſtated in your card to me, I do not wonder that you ſhould be much diſpleaſed at hearing it reported, erroneouſly, that *you* were to anſwer my Memorial. But I muſt take the liberty to ſay, that I do not think you ought to conſider it ſo deeply as you ſeem to do. I can tell you ſomething more about that report than you perhaps yet know. I heard that *ſurmiſe*, for it neither was nor could be any thing more, within *five hours* from the time when my Memorial was diſtributed on Monday; at which time, it was very improbable that you ſhould have declared, or even formed any ſuch reſolution, and impoſſible that you ſhould have read one half of it; and when, as I now underſtand

by

by your card to me, you had not read one word of it, and of courſe could have no preciſe or juſt notion of the tenor of it, nor be able to judge whether it were poſſible or adviſable to anſwer it or not.

The *ſurmiſe* in queſtion I underſtood, and I think you ſhould underſtand, to have meant no more, but that, *if* my Memorial was to be anſwered, your friends would rely on *you* as their leader, and the man of the greateſt talents among them, to come forth as the champion of their cauſe, and to anſwer it for them. The *ſurmiſe*, far from being a ſubject of juſt offence, was really a compliment to you.

Since you do me the honour to ſhew ſo much anxiety about my good opinion of your conduct in that reſpect, I ſhall tell you frankly that I never could believe that you, or that any individual of your College, would even attempt to anſwer my Memorial. I could not ſuppoſe you to adopt or try to vindicate the unworthy and hateful ſentiments contained in the Surgeons Memorial of 1737: for with reſpect to their conſummate turpitude there can be but one opinion. I could not ſuppoſe you to diſpute that a *conſtant ſucceſſion* of the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced Surgeons in Edinburgh, attending and operating in the Hoſpital, muſt be cruelly bad for the patients, and inconſiſtent with the duty of the Managers to permit, for any pecuniary advantage whatever. As little could I ſuppoſe you to diſpute that the attendance of the very ſame youngeſt and moſt inexperienced Surgeons, in ſucceſſion, for any number of months or years, as muſt from time to time happen, according to the ſyſtem of rotation, muſt be juſt as bad for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital during that time, as great a wrong to them, as repugnant to the duty of the Managers, and the purpoſe of the Infirmary, and as real an abomination to every man of ſenſe and worth, as if it were to laſt for a century, or for ever.—Much leſs, (if poſſible), could I ſuppoſe you, or any man of common

ſenſe

ſenſe and common honeſty, to admit thoſe ſelf-evident truths, and yet to inſiſt on adhering to that pernicious ſyſtem, becauſe it was the right of your College, long ſince bought and paid for.

I ſhall tell you frankly, that the worſt I apprehended from you was, that, contrary to your own better judgment, you might find yourſelf obliged by your ſituation and connections, to join with your friends, (collectively and as a party), and even to take a very active part as their leader, in oppoſing that change which I recommend, and which your College in general, or by a great majority, had keenly oppoſed on a former occaſion. *Civium ardor prava jubentium*, in ſome caſes, I believe, has almoſt irreſiſtible force. Little as I know of party politics of any kind, and much as I hate them, worſe even than profeſſional diſputes among medical men, I have always underſtood that the only way to lead a party, or a ſet of men, is to go along with them; eſpecially when they begin to grow violent and unruly. On ſuch occaſions it is well known that men will not attend even to their own intereſt, and on no occaſion will they conſent to be made either wiſer or better, or follow even an Angel to Heaven, if he were ſent on purpoſe to conduct them thither by ſuch honeſt and rational means. If only one tenth part of what I have heard be true, many of our greateſt ſtateſmen, both *ins* and *outs*, have often been fain to commit the practical *Bull*, of leading their friends by following them.

It was on this principle only that I ever thought it poſſible you ſhould be my opponent on this occaſion. To find that you were not to be ſo, that you deſpiſed and reprobated ſuch caballing, and that you were reſolved to act in that independent and honourable manner which you mention in your card, gave me much pleaſure; and has procured you the honour, which you perhaps will think rather a burden, of this long manifeſto. I was happy to think that I had found a friend and aſſiſtant in one whom I expected to have had for an opponent. You will ſee by my Memorial itſelf,

what

what I apprehended would be the means which a man of talents and thorough knowledge of the ſubject would take to fruſtrate my plan; *not* by anſwering my Memorial, or attempting to ſhew that the ſyſtem of the Surgeons attending in rotation, and conſulting promiſcuouſly, is not as bad for the patients as I have ſhewn it to be; *not* by requiring any particular examples to be produced in proof of thoſe evils to the patients, of which I have given only a general view; *not* by requiring that a number of witneſſes ſhould be examined to prove that the general ſyſtem was known to many others, and thoſe the beſt informed and moſt competent judges, to be as bad as I repreſented it; for any ſuch attempts, and eſpecially any enquiries into particular misfortunes, I was ſure would make bad ten times worſe; but by ſlurring over theſe things, and keeping them out of ſight, as much as poſſible; acting on the *defenſive*, and leaving it to lawyers to contend for the bargain of 1738 as they beſt could, on the common principles which would be applicable, and irrefragably valid, in a queſtion about a bargain concerning any kind of property, ſuch as that one which I have ſuppoſed to have been made between the Butchers and the Tanners.

To obviate that plan, which was the only one I had to fear, you will obſerve that I took much pains to ſtate ſtrongly and minutely, on medical and moral principles, the infinite difference between a common contract for property, and the bargain between our predeceſſors and yours, as involving and cruelly violating the intereſt and the rights of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital. As my argument on that ſubject was ſatisfactory to two eminent lawyers whom I conſulted ſeparately, both of whom expreſſed ſtrongly their aſtoniſhment and indignation at that contract, and that ſyſtem which I reprobated, I preſume my argument will be equally ſatisfactory to other lawyers, and to judges, and to all men of competent underſtanding and knowledge, who will fairly attend to it, uninfluenced by paſſion, or intereſt real or ſuppoſed. But from the

the ſtrong hints which you give me in your card, I underſtand that you think ſome of your profeſſional brethren are a good deal influenced by paſſion, and ſome notion of intereſt on this ſubject. I am ſure you would not think ſo without ſufficient reaſon. Such being the caſe, I fear they will not attend to my argument ſo patiently as to perceive the force of it, or at leaſt the neceſſity of anſwering it completely, if they do not think it concluſive; and of courſe may raſhly engage in a conflict, which can do no good, and may do much harm; which cannot be *afflicting to us* in the way which you ſuppoſe, but may be injurious to the ſlender funds of the Hoſpital; and which your brethren who engage in it, may find, when too late, good reaſon to repent bitterly.

After what you have told me of your own ſentiments, and reſolution to leave the deciſion of the buſineſs to the Managers, I hope it is not going too far to beg of you, to uſe your influence with your friends to prevail on them to conſider with attention that part of my argument, and not to engage in any public conflict till they can give an anſwer to it, which to themſelves at leaſt appears fair and ſatisfactory.

On one point, I am ſure, I may with confidence aſk your aſſiſtance, which I ſcarce think you will refuſe me, if you conſider the nature and importance of the object in view, and that it is no matter of favour or partiality to any individual, or any ſet of men, but equally for the good of all, and indeed of the Hoſpital itſelf, and of the public at large. I allude to the mentioning or enquiring into any particular *misfortunes;* or what might be reckoned inſtances of ignorance, incapacity, or miſconduct, in any of the Surgeons who have attended in rotation. I was aware from the firſt, how ſhocking this would be to the public, how injurious to the Hoſpital, and how cruel to the individual Surgeons who had been unfortunate in their honeſt and beſt endeavours to do that duty, to which many of them were unequal; but which, in conſequence

of the cruel ſyſtem eſtabliſhed, they could not decline, without tacitly acknowledging their own deficiencies, and actually ruining themſelves. You will have ſeen by my Memorial how careful I was to avoid every alluſion to particular inſtances, to ſhew that all ſuch enquiries were unneceſſary for my general and benevolent purpoſe, and almoſt inconſiſtent with it; and to deprecate them accordingly, as not only improper in themſelves, but indelicate, and even cruel to ſome individuals; and (I may freely ſay to you) ſuch as could not fail to be very ſhocking to the public at large, and eſpecially to the poor, who, in their utmoſt miſery, might ſoon have occaſion to ſeek that relief which the Infirmary was deſtined to afford them.

I had the vanity to think, as thoſe conſiderations are abundantly obvious, and perfectly undeniable, that I ſhould ſucceed in preventing what would be ſo great an evil to many, and a good to none. I was therefore much ſurpriſed and grieved to learn, (on Wedneſday, the very day that I left Edinburgh, and within forty-eight hours from the time that my Memorial was diſtributed), that ſome particular and perſonal applications had been made, by ſome of your profeſſional brethren, of what I had ſtated in the moſt guarded and general terms, of ſuch misfortunes.

According to my information, two different individuals had, even in that ſhort time, been making the application of my general remarks to themſelves. I declined, as I generally do on all ſuch occaſions, to receive any particular information, or even to be informed of the names of the gentlemen who ſo raſhly ſuppoſed themſelves, or were ſuppoſed by others, to be alluded to in my Memorial.

Certainly no ſuch alluſions were made, or intended, by me; nor did I ever wiſh any ſuch applications to be made of my remarks. It was amply ſufficient for my purpoſe, that the truth and general tenor of them could not be diſputed; and that numberleſs

leſs particulars relating to them, eſpecially the moſt recent particulars, were much better known to the members of your College, and to many other perſons, than they were to me.

I have no doubt either of the juſtneſs or the ſeverity of the applications that have been made of my remarks. I have no doubt that you, who have given ſuch ſtrict attention for many years to the practice of Surgery in the Royal Infirmary, and who are ſo well qualified to judge of it, could eaſily produce 50 or 100 inſtances, not one of which I ever heard of, but all of them unqueſtionably authentic, and abundantly ſhocking; all of which, or any one of which, would too ſtrongly confirm and illuſtrate my general obſervations.

From what you have ſo properly ſtated in your card to me, I am confident you will never make ſuch an ungenerous and cruel uſe of your knowledge: nor did it occur to me when firſt I read your card, but now it ſtrikes me very ſtrongly, that you muſt allude to thoſe particular applications of my general remarks, when you expreſs ſuch anxiety at the proſpect of a conflict of intereſts and paſſions very afflicting to the Managers. Your card was certainly written that very day, perhaps that very hour when I firſt heard of the beginning of that kind of conflict of intereſts and paſſions, which would indeed be very afflicting to the Managers. But obſerve, if the worſt ſhould happen, it is not my fault.

I foreſaw the probability of ſuch an evil to the Gentlemen of your College; I warned them ſtrongly of it, that they might guard againſt it; I did all in my power to prevent it from the firſt: and I now moſt earneſtly beg of you, who have infinitely more influence with your profeſſional brethren than I have, to uſe your utmoſt endeavours to prevent, or if it be too late, as I fear it is, altogether to prevent that ſort of conflict, at leaſt to reſtrain it, and to prevent it from ever coming before the public. I ſhould think you might eaſily convince even the keeneſt of them, that

however juſt and ſevere their animadverſions on their opponents may be, the ſame obſervations may be eaſily retorted on themſelves or their friends, perhaps with equal truth, and certainly with equal or greater ſeverity. Of the truth of particular aſſertions, and conſequently of the juſtneſs of many remarks and cenſures, the public can never judge: but it can judge eaſily, and will judge unmercifully, of the general tenor of them, and of the temper that has long ſubſiſted in your College. Such a conflict, whatever it may be to the Managers, would be worſe for your brethren than twenty *Dawpluckers*. It would even be very ſhocking to the public, and not in the leaſt for the honour or intereſt of your brethren, if it came to be generally believed, that not profeſſional diſputes alone, bad as theſe are, but corporation politics, have long kept them embroiled; and that the ſame parties which prevail in Surgeons Hall about the election of a Preſident, (or a Deacon, who has a vote in the Town-Council), prevail alſo in full vigour in the conſulting-room, and in the operation-room, of the Royal Infirmary, when the lives or limbs of ſome unhappy patient are at ſtake. This, I hope, is not yet generally known or believed by the public: I am ſure I never heard the leaſt ſurmiſe of it till ſome months after I became a Manager of the Royal Infirmary. But within theſe laſt twelve months I have ſeen ſome things in print, and have heard ſome ſuch reports and particular inſtances, as if generally known would effectually eſtabliſh that very ſhocking belief; which you will obſerve *muſt be true* if it be *believed* and *aſſerted* even by a *ſmall minority* of your College.

But from what I have heard, I ſuſpect rather that it will be atteſted by all the Members of it; each party, of courſe, laying the blame on the other. In this caſe, though it would be difficult or impoſſible to judge which was moſt in fault, it would be impoſſible not to perceive, that at leaſt one party, moſt probably both, were much to blame: It would be impoſſible for any judicious and impartial

impartial perſon not to pronounce with indignation, that that ſyſtem of the promiſcuous attendance and conſultations of the Surgeons, which expoſed the ſick poor to ſuch horrible evils, muſt be fundamentally wrong. It cannot eſcape your obſervation, that while I thus earneſtly entreat you to employ your great influence with your brethren to prevent ſuch enquiries, and ſuch public diſcuſſions, my motive and purpoſe *muſt be pure and honourable*, and can be no other than what I have fully expreſſed. You cannot fail to perceive, that though they are in one point of view foreign to my argument, and unneceſſary to it, they are not ſubverſive of it. It is plain that they tend greatly, too greatly, to ſtrengthen, not to weaken my argument, and the Managers claim. They would ſoon produce all the effect which we want, but they would do a great deal more, which we do not want, and ſhould be very ſorry to ſee. If it ever ſhall be found *neceſſary*, which I am happy to think is not likely to be the caſe, to make them known, it certainly ſhall be done. None of the Managers can be ſuppoſed ſo brainleſs or ſo nerveleſs, as to heſitate a moment between the two wrongs, ſhocking the public with the particular knowledge of ſuch evils, or allowing ſuch ſhocking evils to continue. The former would be virtue, and real kindneſs, in compariſon of the latter.

It would be mere affectation in me, and I am ſure would meet with no credit from you, who know ſo much of the practice of Surgery in the Royal Infirmary, were I to ſay that I had not heard of any recent inſtances (within theſe few years) of ſuch profeſſional misfortunes. But you muſt have ſeen by this time how careful I have been in my Memorial not to allude to them even in the moſt diſtant manner. I am ſure that you yourſelf, who probably know more of the matter than any body, could not, from any thing that I have ſaid, undertake to ſpecify any caſe, or any Surgeon, that I had particularly in view.

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As the moſt convincing proof which can be given that I meant no ſuch particular applications as I underſtand were ſoon made of my general remarks, I ſhall mention to you a few out of many *older* ſtories, ſome of them probably long before your time, though within my memory; and ſuch as within theſe few months I have heard from different perſons who were eye-witneſſes of them.

[For reaſons fully explained already, I ſuppreſs here the particular inſtances which were mentioned in my letter to Mr John Bell: but he has my hearty permiſſion to publiſh them *verbatim* if he pleaſes.]

I obſerve with much pleaſure what you mention in your card, " That nothing could engage you in any public diſpute, nor be " an apology to yourſelf for writing any Pamphlet or Memorial, " except the ſincere hope of being uſeful, or the neceſſary duty of " ſelf-defence." Your reſolution in both theſe reſpects appears to me ſo indiſputably proper and honourable, that it would be ſuperfluous to ſay ſo, or to take any notice of it, were it not that it ſeems to imply ſome apprehenſion on your part, that I (in my Memorial) had either made ſome ſuch attack on you as would oblige you to defend yourſelf in that manner, or elſe that I had blamed you for defending yourſelf when attacked by others. Inſinuations ſo groundleſs, nay, ſo repugnant to the tenor of my Memorial, muſt have proceeded from ſome of thoſe " idle and buſy people," as you very properly call them, who have been amuſing themſelves with fancying ſome ſiniſter motives on my part for what I have done.

As you have probably read my Memorial by this time, I need not tell you that it contains no attack or cenſure on you. On the contrary, in the only two paſſages in which you are alluded to, for you are not mentioned in it, you will find, that it is not only without contumely, but with reſpect and honour: In the one place, as " a man of talents, and for ought I know,

" a very good Surgeon :" In the other, as " the man of the " greateſt talents, and the great leader of one party." This may be erroneous, but it cannot be, nor was it meant to be, injurious to you. If it is erroneous, I ſhall be obliged to you if you will ſet me right. It was written avowedly without any direct or perſonal knowledge, on the faith of current reports, which I had often heard repeated, and never once heard contradicted.

As to the other point to which that paſſage in your card ſeems to relate, ſome ſurmiſe that I had blamed you for having defended yourſelf when attacked in your profeſſional character, I muſt in the firſt place aſſure you ſolemnly, that I never knew or ſuſpected, till I read your card, that you had defended yourſelf againſt ſuch attacks, from Jonathan Dawplucker, or any other body. In the ſecond place, I ſhall tell you frankly, that I think you did perfectly right to defend yourſelf againſt ſuch a virulent attack : nor ſhould I blame you in the leaſt, if on receiving ſuch provocation, (for I have now read that firſt Dawplucker), you have defended yourſelf with much aſperity. Though I never will interfere, or give any opinion in ſuch diſputes, I ſhall be curious to read your defence, from which I expect great entertainment. In the third place, I need not tell you, for you ſurely know it already if you have read my Paper, that there is no ſuch cenſure expreſſed or inſinuated in it; nor can I conceive how ſuch a thing could be ſuppoſed, unleſs perhaps by ſome miſapplication, or miſconſtruing of the Greek epigram, (given as an aphoriſm of Hippocrates), which, like the ironical exhortations to Dawplucker to continue his practice of deplumation, was intended, and I ſhould have thought muſt have been underſtood, as the ſtrongeſt poſſible warning and admonition to all parties to deſiſt from that kind of warfare, by telling them that the perſon, however keen and inveterate, who began the attack, would probably ſoon have the worſt

of

of it; like the wicked viper in the epigram, who bit a Cappadocian, but died herſelf as ſoon as ſhe taſted his poiſonous blood.

I am much gratified with the confidence which you expreſs in the impartiality, humanity, and public ſpirit of my Memorial, and for taking the trouble to aſſure me of thoſe ſentiments, even before you read it. I am ſure the reading of it muſt have completely ſatisfied you, that you had done me no more than juſtice in that reſpect. Indeed I think it muſt ſurpaſs the power of human genius or imagination, to ſuppoſe any ſiniſter motive on my part for what I have done. You know, that in my ſituation I have every thing to loſe, and nothing to gain, by any ſuch unworthy conduct.

Allow me, therefore, to point out to you, that there is one, and but one paſſage in your card, which ſeems to do me injuſtice, at leaſt by inſinuation, and which at any rate does not ſuit well with the reſt of your card. You ſay, " you will wait compoſedly the " iſſue of this buſineſs, by which alone the deſign of this addreſs " can be judged of." This ſeems to imply, that the deſign of it may be ſomething different from what is avowed. This I think is impoſſible; and ſo I truſt will you think, when you have read my Paper. But at any rate, I cannot ſee on what principle of logic, or morals, or law, or equity, my deſign can be judged of by the iſſue of the buſineſs; in which (I mean in the ſelection of Surgeons for permanent attendance in the Hoſpital) I have ſolemnly declared that I will take no concern; and in which, if I did take a ſhare, I ſhould be but *one* of twelve, or perhaps twenty men, each of whom would have an equal vote with me, and probably much more influence. If the Managers agree to do what I propoſe, you might reaſonably ſay that ſuch was my deſign. But if they ſhould do ſomething very different, perhaps repugnant to my principles, my reaſonings, and my wiſhes, and almoſt as bad as the preſent ſyſtem, do you think my deſign can be judged of by that,

that, or can I be blamed for it? You might as reaſonably propoſe to hang me for the firſt rape which any of them individually ſhall commit. What happened once may happen again; they may be bribed, as their predeceſſors were in 1738, to do what they all know to be wrong; or the Devil may enter into them fifty different ways; and ſtill I may be as innocent of all their miſconduct as you will be. This I think you muſt acknowledge, if you will attend to it for a moment.

But it is for a much more important purpoſe than remonſtrating with you on that contingent and very improbable injuſtice to myſelf, that I take notice of your inſinuation. I have as perfect confidence as you expreſs in the deciſion of the Managers, as what "will be honourable and impartial, tending only to the public "good;" that is, to the beſt of their judgment, information, and belief. But they are not infallible: and though there can be no doubt that, in the firſt place, they muſt get rid of that abominable contract which has long reſtrained them from doing their duty; and no doubt that they muſt henceforth and for ever take care not to make any bargain with your College, or with any ſet of men, which may hinder them from making occaſionally ſuch changes, and in general doing whatever they think beſt for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, as their duty requires of them; yet there may be great doubts as to the individuals who ought in the firſt place to be ſelected, and permanently, either for life and good behaviour, or for a term of years, appointed ordinary Surgeons to the Hoſpital.

Though *all* the Members of your College *cannot* be, yet *many* of them certainly *may be*, *equally* well qualified for that duty: many more I am convinced are ſo, than can ever be wanted to do that duty to the beſt advantage; juſt as is the caſe with the College of Phyſicians. I am ſure the Managers would be happy, as indeed it is their duty, to obtain every poſſible information and aſſiſtance to

direct their judgment and choice in ſo important a buſineſs. I have no doubt that you could give them valuable and ſatisfactory information with reſpect to that important concern. What you ſay of your reſolution to wait the iſſue of the buſineſs, and from it to judge of the deſign of my Addreſs, ſeems to imply, that you have already ſome fixed teſt or ſtandard by which you can judge, and mean to decide, on the propriety of the Managers conduct. Would it not be better to communicate this to them without delay? Would it not be better to prevent, or at leaſt to do your beſt endeavours to prevent, any wrong from being done, and to procure the utmoſt good that can be procured to the ſick poor, than to reſerve to yourſelf the means and the power of condemning afterwards the Managers for any wrong that they may have done, perhaps purely for want of ſuch information as you could have given them? Nay, if you thought more unfavourably than you do of the Managers, ſtill it would be right to give them that kind of information, as it would leave them leſs or no excuſe for any wrong they might do, and would give tenfold force to any juſt animadverſions which you or your brethren might make on their conduct. To give your advice, information, and aſſiſtance to the Managers in that reſpect, even publicly and in print, would not be inconſiſtent with your reſolution expreſſed in your card to me. It might naturally reſult from your "ſincere hope of being uſeful." But I ſhould think it ſtill better if you did it more privately, and only in writing. I cannot offer to lay before them any ſuch paper from you; becauſe I have already declared, that I will take no concern in the choice of the Surgeons, either directly or indirectly. But any other of the Managers, I am convinced, will be glad to do it. For the ſame reaſon you will underſtand, that I can neither ſecond nor oppoſe your recommendation of particular Surgeons. But you are welcome to ſtate, that you offered it in conſequence of my ſuggeſtion. I take it for granted, that any ſuch paper from you to the Managers will be

be written on the ſame liberal and honourable principles which are ſo well expreſſed in your card to me, without any ſelfiſh or party views. And I think I can ſafely promiſe for the Managers, that they will faithfully pay due attention to any ſuch communication from you: that is, they will either do as you propoſe, or be ready, whenever there is occaſion, to give good reaſons for not doing ſo. But you muſt not underſtand that I am authoriſed to promiſe for them, or that I think they ſhould promiſe, that they will be directed in their choice by your opinion, or that of any individual of your College. That would be very abſurd: and it would be ſtill more abſurd to be directed by your whole College as a body, or to leave the choice to the majority of your College; for reaſons too obvious to mention; but which ſeem to have been well underſtood and ſtrongly felt by Mr Kennedy and his friends near ſeventy years ago, and which have been too often and too ſtrongly illuſtrated by the conduct of certain Univerſities, which muſt be nameleſs.

As you muſt by this time have read my Memorial from end to end, I truſt you are convinced, that you did me no more than juſtice when you took it for granted, that my Memorial contained nothing inſulting to your profeſſion, or injurious to any individual of your College. But I cannot ſay, with truth, that I think myſelf much obliged to you for ſuch a compliment. To have ſuppoſed otherwiſe of me, would have been to ſuppoſe me ſtark mad; for nothing but perfect inſanity could produce or account for ſuch conduct on my part, which on any occaſion would be diſgraceful and ruinous to me, and which, on this occaſion, would have been inconſiſtent with my plan, to obtain the unanimous approbation of all men of ſenſe, and worth, and competent knowledge, and the unanimous concurrence of the gentlemen of your profeſſion, in the meaſure that I propoſed. If I had wronged any individual among them, or inſulted the whole of them by inſulting their profeſſion,

they would ſoon, even before this time, have had full revenge of me. It is poſſible, notwithſtanding all my anxious care to avoid ſuch particular alluſions as could be applied to any individuals, that ſome unlucky and cruel applications may be made of my general remarks. I can only ſay, that I never intended ſuch a wrong to them, but quite the contrary; and that I am very ſorry ſuch a wrong to them ſhould be done by others who have preſumed to make applications which I never meant. But it would be indelicate and cruel, and make bad worſe, to enquire into particulars.

As to any inſults to your profeſſion, nothing could be more repugnant to my real ſentiments, uniformly expreſſed, and, I ſhould think, abundantly teſtified by my conduct all my life to all your profeſſional brethren. You know how our acquaintance began, and how it has continued. If you think it worth your while to enquire, you will find that I have lived preciſely on the ſame footing with all others of your profeſſion; or perhaps you know already, that I never choſe to have any intercourſe or connection with any of them, but what fairly reſulted from the practice of my own; of courſe, I have met times innumerable with thoſe who have the greateſt employment, and very ſeldom, or never, with others of them; and have had much leſs intimacy with ſeveral of them than probably I ſhould have had if they had not been Surgeons, or I not a Phyſician. You cannot ſay there is any thing wrong in that conduct, or that you could even have wiſhed me to have acted otherwiſe. You cannot fail to perceive, that the oppoſite conduct towards your brethren would have been illiberal at leaſt, if not knaviſh, in one of my profeſſion. You cannot, therefore, regard that kind of reſerve on my part as implying any contempt for your profeſſion, or any diſreſpect for thoſe who practiſe it; but quite the contrary, a proper reſpect and delicacy to them, and confidence in their upright conduct. No man can be ſuppoſed to know better the real importance of Surgery, and the reſpect due to men of merit in that profeſſion,

than

than a Phyſician, not bred a Surgeon, and who never attempts to practiſe Surgery. You ſurely know what I do, fifty or a hundred times in a year, to patients who, not underſtanding the diſtinctions of our profeſſions, apply to me when they labour under complaints in which I can do them little or no ſervice, and which properly belong to your province; I can do nothing but refer them to the gentlemen of your profeſſion for relief. Or what do you think I ſhould do if myſelf and ſome of my beſt friends had got ſevere wounds, or broken or diſlocated limbs? Do you think I ſhould truſt their lives or limbs, or my own, to the care of a Phyſician, or of a Surgeon? What I have uniformly thought, and ſaid, and done, with reſpect to your profeſſion, I have expreſſed *ſtrongly and repeatedly* in my Memorial. If you know of any thing ſtronger in favour of your profeſſion, and of thoſe who practiſe it, eſpecially of thoſe with whom I am beſt acquainted, though, having no knowledge of the contrary, I preſume the ſame of all the reſt, I beg you will inform me, and I ſhall be happy to avail myſelf of your information the firſt opportunity.

In the mean time I preſume, without any paradox, that I have expreſſed myſelf as I really think of your profeſſion, and of thoſe who practiſe it in this city, with much more eſteem and reſpect than you have generally done, or perhaps would do at preſent. And I doubt much whether many of your profeſſional brethren, if any of them, think and ſpeak as favourably of Phyſic and Phyſicians, as I have done of Surgery and Surgeons. You muſt have ſeen, that in my Memorial I have made no diſtinction but what reſults from their very different conduct in ſimilar circumſtances, between them and Phyſicians. The conduct of the Phyſicians to the Infirmary was liberal and honourable; and muſt have been thought ſo, if it had been done by a Corporation of Chimney Sweepers. The conduct of the Surgeons was juſt the reverſe; and muſt be thought ſo if it were done by a College of Princes. I truſt there neither is, nor ever was,

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(not even excepting Deacon Kennedy and his worthy aſſociates), nor ever will be, in your College, ſo great a Dunce as to ſuppoſe, that the reſpect due to your profeſſion, and to the many men of merit who practiſe it, can be extended, or ought to be extended, to every thing, right or wrong, liberal or ſordid, done by a Corporation of Surgeons, or by any individuals of that Profeſſion. Does your reſpect for your own profeſſion extend to all the operations of Dawplucker? What would you have ſaid or thought of me, if, inſtead of giving the true account of all Medical warfare as it was, and is, and ever will be, and muſt be, I had given ten or a dozen quotations from the firſt Dawplucker? And what would Benjamin Bell and his friends have ſaid or thought of me, if I had given as many choice quotations from the ſecond Dawplucker, in proof of that inveterate rancour, which it was eſſential to my argument, and to the faithful diſcharge of my duty, to ſhew, prevailed among your profeſſional brethren? I ſhould in that caſe have ſaid nothing but the truth; but it would not have been the whole truth.

I thought it more candid, as well as rational, and much more delicate and reſpectful to your College, to ſhew, that ſuch diſputes were not accidental and tranſient, depending on the particular character, talents, and conduct of a few individuals, but in a manner eſſential to the Medical Profeſſion, and at leaſt univerſally found among us. My examples and illuſtrations were taken chiefly from my own profeſſion. You know well why I took them from diſtant ages and nations rather than from our own; and what conſiderations have always reſtrained me, even in the diſcharge of my Academical duty, from diſſecting and anatomiſing, as they deſerve, many of our modern and home-bred medical writers. If any of your brethren, or you in particular, whom I believe to be very well qualified for the taſk, will take the trouble to treat them and their ſyſtems, and their reaſonings, their obſervations, their caſes, their contradictions, their lies, their diſputes, controverſies, and quarrels,

quarrels, as you think they deſerve, I ſhall be much obliged to you, and my ſtudents much more. I took my illuſtrations of Chirurgical warfare chiefly from London; which, I think, was delicate to the Surgeons of Edinburgh; I am ſure it was meant to be ſo. I gave no particular inſtances of ſuch warfare among them, becauſe I thought ſuch inſtances would be cruel, and might even be injurious to ſome individuals; and I referred, for that general information which was indiſpenſably neceſſary in my argument, to books already in print, and much better known to many other people than to me. I treated ſuch warfare with ridicule, rather than with that ſerious and juſt reprehenſion which it deſerved; becauſe it was impoſſible that ſuch ridicule could be really hurtful or injurious to any individuals, and I thought it moſt likely to accompliſh the general good which I had in view. I know there are many

" *Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,*
" *But touch'd and ſham'd by ridicule alone.*"

My real ſerious object was to ſave the Infirmary the expence, and your College the diſgrace of a lawſuit. Whatever ſome idle buſy people, as you very properly call them, may do, I am ſure you will not diſpute with me, that Phyſic and Surgery are only different branches of the ſame profeſſion; that the ſame innate and inveterate evils pervade and corrupt them both; that the ſcience and the art of both are very imperfect; that they are not only intereſting ſciences and uſeful arts, but trades and crafts, by which thoſe who practiſe them muſt live; that conſequently theſe are neceſſarily rivals, and often bitter enemies to one another; that people in general expect much more from Phyſic and from Surgery, than either the one or the other can do for them; and yet that it would be a cruel wrong to people to undeceive them on this point, if it were poſſible to do ſo, which may well be doubted; that both

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of them muſt be practiſed with a certain kind of ſecrecy; that neither the public, nor the patients themſelves, can in general judge fully and fairly of the real and comparative merits of Phyſicians and Surgeons by their performances, as they may do of Painters and Fidlers, Tailors and Shoemakers; that thoſe who alone can fairly judge of the merits of medical men, have an evident intereſt, and a ſtrong temptation to conceal and decry them, eſpecially when they are very great; and that many of the beſt judges have not been able to reſiſt that temptation; that many medical men (Phyſicians and Surgeons alike) have endeavoured to acquire diſtinction by framing and publiſhing ſyſtems, others by making, (or pretending to make), and publiſhing obſervations, and hiſtories of caſes; the former ſtriving to diſplay their talents, their ſcience, and their learning, the latter to ſhew their accuracy and attention, their ſkill and their ſucceſs; that their ſyſtems are in general erroneous, often viſionary and pernicious, their reaſonings contemptible, their obſervations contradictory, their caſes deceitful; that they overturn one another's ſyſtems, refute one another's reaſonings, controvert one another's facts, and ridicule one another's caſes, without mercy; that even where there is no intended deceit or falſehood, there is always imperfection, and often error in ſtating a caſe; that every caſe may be ſtated, as every ſtory may be told, two or three ways, and perhaps none of them the right way; that publications of caſes are often particularly diſgraceful, and much worſe than any errors in opinions or reaſonings, as many of them have been known, and many more have been ſtrongly ſuſpected to be wilfully falſe; that caſes and obſervations when inconſiſtent cannot be all true, but that they may be all falſe; that the diſputes among medical men about their ſyſtems, their reaſonings, their obſervations, and their caſes, have been numberleſs, endleſs, uſeleſs, violent, implacable, and diſgraceful.

You will not diſpute with me that moſt of theſe things are ſad evils,

evils, and that it would be happy for mankind if they or any of them could be removed, or even leſſened.

I know of nothing ſo likely to have that ſalutary effect, as fairly ſtating them, ſhewing ſome of their bad conſequences, eſpecially the contempt and reproach which they bring on our profeſſion, and treating them with ridicule rather than with grave cenſure. I ſhall be glad to have it ſaid of me, " *Caſtigat ridendo mores.*" If you know of any better means to accompliſh the ſame deſirable end, I heartily wiſh you would employ them. *Si quid noviſti rectius iſtis, candidus imperti : ſi non, his utere mecum.*

In the mean time, you, and your more diſtruſtful Brethren, may ſee from the whole tenor of my Memorial, that I no more meant to inſult your profeſſion, than to inſult my own ; or to inſult my own Students, and their Societies ; or to inſult the Government of my country, and Religion itſelf ; becauſe I have treated with ridicule the diſputes of Phyſicians, the common errors of medical Students, the common abuſes of their Societies, the fooliſh debates and diſgraceful party ſpirit which too often prevail in popular Aſſemblies, and the ſtill more hateful diſputes and rancorous warfare of angry controverſial Divines.

To you, even before you read my Paper, ſtill more after reading it, all this long diſcuſſion would be uſeleſs. But it may be of ſome uſe to many men of ſenſe, and worth, and candour, who have not taken the trouble to read my Memorial, and who raſhly judge of it from one or two paſſages, without knowing the leaſt of its general tenor and purpoſe. As to thoſe idle buſy people, whoſe veracity, as well as underſtanding, you ſeem to hold in juſt contempt, it is impoſſible to ſet them right ; and I truſt you are too wiſe a man to attempt it. They are beyond the reach of argument or reaſon.

Whatever ſuch men may think of me, you, I am ſure, cannot think me ſuch an aſs, as ever to have expected to do the great

public good which I intended, without incurring the foulest suspicions and reproaches of the vulgar, the ignorant, and the malicious.

I know there are many people who do not believe in Virtue, or understand it, or know what it is. That is the worst of vice, and incapable of reform. " *Malheur à ceux qui cessent à croire a la* " *Vertu.*"

The suspicions and reproaches of such men are not indifferent to me; they are acceptable, and part of my reward for doing what is right. They tend to give me some distinction, in common with the greatest, the wisest, and the best men in the nation; and they will never discompose my philosophy.

It is long since I knew the fable of the Mastiff and his Whelp, who were going through a village together. All the little dogs came out and barked at them. " Father," said the Whelp, " why " don't you worry these nasty curs that bark at you?" " Child," said the old dog, " if there were no curs, I should be no Mastiff."

I trust the length of this *Epistolaccio* will be an excuse for the delay in sending it.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obliged and most obedient servant,

J. Gregory.

Such were the arguments and explanations by which I endeavoured to convince Mr John Bell and his adherents of the injustice which they did to me, and the still greater wrong which they were likely to do to themselves, by persisting in mistaking, or misrepresenting, the tenor and purpose of my Memorial. By such means I hoped to have prevented any such answers and publications, as that one with which he has favoured the world.

At

At Phœbi nondum patiens immanis in antro
Bacchatur vates, magnum ſi pectore poſſit
Excuſſiſſe Deum: tanto magis ille fatigat
Os rabidum, fera corda domans, fingitque premendo.
Oſtia jamque domus patuere ingentia centum
Sponte ſua, vatiſque ferunt reſponſa per auras.

Happy indeed it was for all concerned that I did not ſucceed in that well meant but ill judged attempt. There can be no doubt, that the head of Jupiter, or the belly of Garagantua, muſt have burſt, if they had been pregnant with ſo many vaſt conceptions, and had not been allowed to give them vent. Then would the world have been deprived for ever, not only of Mr John Bell's ineſtimable anſwer to my Memorial, but of numberleſs other works, probably not leſs admirable, which may reaſonably be expected from his inexhauſtible matrix.

That I may not incur the reproach of ſuppreſſing any part of a correſpondence ſo honourable to him, or of telling only part of the truth, I ſubjoin three other pieces of our correſpondence, which, with the preceding five, make the whole of it. But for the right underſtanding of theſe I muſt premiſe, that the firſt time I met Mr John Bell after his anſwer to my Memorial was publiſhed, I addreſſed him with the ſame frankneſs and good humour as on all former occaſions, thanked him for the copy of it which he had ſent me, and for the work altogether, which I aſſured him, with perfect truth, had afforded me much entertainment and gratification, and told him that he was heartily welcome to uſe all manner of freedom with every thing that I wrote. Theſe declarations he received very graciouſly, and replied to them in the moſt polite terms. At parting I reminded him of the copy of the Surgeons Memorial (1737), which he had applied to Mr Jardine to borrow from me

for his uſe, when he was writing his anſwer to me; and which, as it had been in his hands for ſome weeks, I preſumed he had done with, and begged him to return to me. This he moſt politely promiſed to do.—That ſame evening I had the honour to receive from him the following letter.

N° VI.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR very generous manner of receiving me in the ſtreets, and the terms in which you addreſſed me, convince me of your liberal diſpoſitions, and remind me ſtrongly of the many kind things you were pleaſed to ſay of me at a time of life when ſuch attentions were to me of more importance than now, and could not be unacceptable to any man.

Your continued liberality encourages me to anſwer that card which you did me the honour to addreſs to me ſome months ago. I am happy to find that I may now remind you of your former liberal invitation, " that though we were neceſſarily opponents, " there was no reaſon why we ſhould be enemies." I hope to be allowed the benefit of this expreſſion.—I remember indeed nothing but kindneſs on your part towards me, and ſhall always take a pleaſure in ſhowing Dr Gregory every mark of reſpect.

Believe me, Sir, in ſincerity and friendſhip,

Your moſt obedient,

JOHN BELL.

George's Street, N° 9.

N° VII.

N° VII.

St Andrew's Square, Sunday Evening, Dec. 7. 1800.

DEAR SIR,

I am very ſorry, and to ſay the truth, ſomewhat ſurpriſed, that you ſhould have ſuppoſed me capable of ſuch fooliſh and illiberal conduct, as to take amiſs your Pamphlet in anſwer to my Memorial. I have on the contrary been much entertained and gratified with it. And if you choſe to ſpeak out all that you think, I preſume you would ſay you thought yourſelf much obliged to me for giving you ſo fine an opportunity to diſplay your talents. Perhaps I may yet give you another: but this I cannot abſolutely promiſe; for it muſt depend on my finding leiſure for it; as to inclination, I have enough. Any thing that I ſhall write on the ſubject, you ſhall be heartily welcome to uſe all manner of freedom with: to diſſect and anatomiſe it in your beſt manner. *Hanc veniam petimuſque damuſque viciſſim.* There are many points on which we differ ſo much, that to argue about them with one another would be uſeleſs and endleſs: for example, the Clinical Lectures. I ſhould wiſh, if I can find time, to ſtate *ſeriouſly* my thoughts of them. Many other things in your pamphlet I ſhould treat only with good-humoured raillery.

If you do not know it already, I have the pleaſure to inform you, that by your laſt publication you have completely won the heart of your old enemy Judas Johnſon, Eſq; who is quite charmed with it, and declares he had no notion that you were a man of ſuch talents.

I am your obliged and moſt obedient ſervant,

J. GREGORY.

P. S. I ſhall be obliged to you if you will return me by the bearer the Surgeons Memorial.

To Mr John Bell.

N° VIII.

N° VIII.

Mr Bell returns the Memorial to Dr Gregory with his reſpectful compliments; wiſhes him all poſſible ſucceſs in his new enterpriſe, which he truſts will be as profitable for the Clinical School, as his firſt was for the School of Surgery—and as acceptable to his old friend Judas Johnſton as any thing Mr Bell can write.

George's Street, N° 9.

SINCE the laſt of the preceding letters was written, and even ſince the greater part of the preceding pages was printed off, an event has occurred which will afford the public ſome amuſement, and will ſave me much trouble.

The Royal College of Surgeons (that is to ſay the majority of that Society) has brought the general queſtion in diſpute between them and the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, I mean the validity of the bargain, or ſuppoſed contract, between their predeceſſors and ours in 1738, before a Court of Juſtice.

This, of courſe, precludes all further reaſonings or illuſtrations from me on that point; for, in the firſt place, they muſt now be quite unneceſſary, as every thing that I could urge, and much more, will be ſtated much better, and to much better purpoſe, in the proper place, by our counſel learned in the law; and, in the ſecond place, I do not think it quite proper for me to meddle with a queſtion which is now under conſideration in a Court of Juſtice. Neither the torrent of abuſe poured out on me by Mr John Bell in his Pamphlet, nor the conduct of his Brethren who firſt employed him to write that Pamphlet, and then, by their vote of thanks to him,

him, ſanctioned it and adopted it as their own, can make it right for me to offer any opinion or argument on the queſtion, which the Court muſt decide. I therefore, with much pleaſure, change the plan of this Memorial; and, in the following pages, ſhall confine my remarks to certain particulars contained in Mr John Bell's pamphlet, which, as intereſting to me perſonally, or to the Managers as a body corporate, or to the public at large, ſeem to require ſome animadverſion, but are totally unconnected with the legal queſtion now at iſſue.

Even in the letters prefixed by Mr John Bell to his anſwer to my Memorial, there are ſome things which muſt not be allowed to paſs unnoticed.

In the firſt of them we are informed, that "at a meeting of the "Junior Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, it was re-"ſolved, that Mr John Bell be requeſted to draw up an anſwer to "Dr Gregory's Memorial, to be preſented to the Managers of the "Royal Infirmary at their firſt meeting, for the purpoſe of doing "away thoſe groſs miſrepreſentations of the character and conduct "of the younger Surgeons contained in the ſaid Memorial."

This reſolution is expreſſed in ſuch a manner, as to make every reader believe that *all* the junior Surgeons agreed in that reſolution and requeſt, and in thinking that I in my Memorial had groſsly miſrepreſented their character and conduct.

But the fact is, all the junior Surgeons did not concur in that reſolution; nor do I believe that they were all at that meeting, or even knew of ſuch a meeting being called: and moſt certainly they did not all agree in thinking that I had miſrepreſented their character and conduct; for ſeveral of them keenly adopted the ſame ſenti-

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ments and principles which I had expreſſed, and avowed them in the ſtrongeſt poſſible terms. Such has been the conduct of Meſſ. Andrew Inglis, William Brown, John Thomſon, George Bell, William Newbigging, and John Allan. It is but juſtice to theſe Gentlemen to mention their names, as it would be highly injurious to them to have it believed by the public that they concurred with the majority of their brethren, the junior Surgeons, in ſo unjuſt and abſurd an opinion of my Memorial, and in the reſolution to requeſt Mr John Bell to write an anſwer to it.

The peruſal of my Memorial muſt convince every intelligent and candid perſon, that nothing unjuſt, or even unfavourable, with reſpect to the junior Surgeons, is ſaid or intended by me; and the conduct of theſe ſix gentlemen of that claſs, affords complete proof that it is not the accidental circumſtance of being a junior Surgeon, nor yet any miſrepreſentation of the character and conduct of the junior Surgeons as a claſs or body of men, which ſome of them have ſo boldly imputed to me, that makes any one of them think unfavourably of my Memorial, or differ in opinion from me as to the evils reſulting from their promiſcuous attendance in the Infirmary by rotation.

For any individual to miſrepreſent groſsly the character and conduct of the junior members of any Society or Corporation, appears to me ſo abſurd a folly, as can be accounted for only on the ſuppoſition of downright inſanity; eſpecially when it is evidently for the honour, the intereſt, and the comfort of ſuch an individual to live on good terms with every member of that Society.

There are ſome Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, both junior and ſenior, whom I do not know by ſight, and others whom I do not know even by character, and of whom I neither know nor ever heard any evil. It is evidently impoſſible that I ſhould have any wiſh to injure ſuch men, either collectively or individually, by miſrepreſenting their character and conduct. And, in fact, ſo far

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am I from thinking unfavourably of the character and conduct of the Junior Surgeons, or from having in my Memorial ſaid any thing injurious of them, in compariſon of the Senior Members of their College, that I have been at much pains to expreſs and to eſtabliſh an almoſt oppoſite ſentiment.

If it will afford them any ſatisfaction or comfort, I ſhall aſſure them, that to my certain knowledge *ſome* of the Junior Surgeons are very greatly ſuperior in talents and knowledge to *ſome* of the Senior Surgeons. But that *all* the Juniors ſhould be ſuperior to *all* the Seniors; or that *all* the Juniors ſhould be equal, or nearly equal, to one another in talents and profeſſional knowledge; or that the worſt of the Juniors ſhould be better than the beſt of their Seniors, or at leaſt as good as them; or that it ſhould be a matter of perfect indifference to the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, what Surgeon, or how many Surgeons in rotation, ſhall have the care of them:—all theſe are ſuch things as I never can believe, or expect any credit from men of ſenſe if I ſhould profeſs to believe.

As little can I believe that Surgeons do not improve by much experience; and that, from the nature of their profeſſion, it is impoſſible that they ſhould improve by experience; which is the doctrine now maintained by Mr John Bell and his adherents. I believe the merit of the diſcovery is entirely their own; and I ſcarce think any perſon will chooſe to diſpute it with them.

From the boldneſs with which Mr John Bell aſſerts it, in his anſwer to my Memorial, and from his total ſilence with reſpect to the very oppoſite opinion, which was ſtrongly aſſerted by Deacon Kennedy and his aſſociates as ſelf-evident and undeniable, and ſeemingly admitted as ſuch by the Managers and by the public more than ſixty years ago, and indeed ever ſince, and on the faith of which the bargain in 1738 was concluded, it is plain that Mr John Bell and his adherents have completely *ſhifted their ground*. They now contend for the validity and continuance of that bar-

gain, *not* as being for the good of the Surgeons, and in a manner neceſſary for their improvement, though at the riſk and expence of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, but as not in the leaſt for the good of the Surgeons, who, from the hour in which they finiſh their apprenticeſhips, and become Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, have attained the higheſt profeſſional ſkill, and manual dexterity as operators; ſo that the only principles on which they now contend for that bargain, and for their own promiſcuous attendance by rotation, are, that theſe things are honourable and gratifying to the Surgeons, and, though not poſitively good, at leaſt not bad, but quite indifferent to the ſick poor in the Hoſpital.

I give Mr John Bell great credit for this new and maſterly piece of generalſhip; ſhifting his ground completely, when he found his former poſition not quite ſo tenable as it had at firſt been thought; and greater credit ſtill for the ſuperior genius he has ſhewn, in now chooſing a poſition which, to men of ordinary talents, or plain common ſenſe, muſt appear abſolutely untenable. One point he undoubtedly ſecures by it; his brethren can loſe nothing, even if their cauſe ſhall be decided againſt them. As it is not now for the ſake of any improvement to themſelves that they are ſo eager to give their laborious ſervices; if they ſhall be prevented from doing this, they will be ſaved an infinite deal of trouble; they will be preſerved from all thoſe riſks to themſelves, in point of fame and fortune, which might accidentally have reſulted from the bad ſucceſs of various pieces of chirurgical practice, or from a fatal event of a capital operation, however dexterouſly performed; while ſtill their honour will remain entire; and their good intentions no man can take from them.

If the corporation of Bakers had been accuſtomed to furniſh the patients in the Infirmary with bread, the corporation of Butchers to furniſh them with meat, the Tailors with clothes, the Shoemakers with ſhoes, the Barbers with ſhaving; and if all theſe ſeveral corporations

rations had been accuſtomed to furniſh their reſpective commodities and good offices *gratis*, as the Surgeons have done their ſervices; and if the Managers, perhaps from ſome notion of getting better bread, and meat, and clothes, and ſhoes, and ſhaving, from a few individuals of each corporation, choſe to employ but a few inſtead of all the members of them, the others, though ſtill willing to give their aid as before, could not complain of any loſs that they ſuſtained, or any wrong done to them; and as long as their Chriſtian charity and brotherly love continued in vigour, they could never fail to find plenty of objects on whom they might beſtow their good offices.

But whatever merit Mr John Bell may have in contriving ſo new an argument and ſtate of the caſe, which I dare ſay will aſtoniſh at leaſt, and perhaps puzzle the ableſt lawyers that are oppoſed to him, I muſt think he and his friends have carried the joke rather too far, when they reproach me with miſrepreſenting the character and conduct of the Junior Surgeons; for they muſt have perceived that I took the fact as ſtated by thoſe very Surgeons who made the bargain with the Managers; but I conſidered that fact relatively to the poor patients, while Meſſ. Kennedy and Co. conſidered it only in relation to the Junior Surgeons, and the improvement which at that time they avowedly ſtood much in need of, and hoped to acquire by practiſing in the Hoſpital. To be committed to the care of ſuch Surgeons, who needed ſuch improvement, and practiſed in hopes of acquiring it, was ſurely a cruel wrong to the patients.

I ſhould have thought it more candid, as well as more rational in Mr John Bell, to have given me due praiſe for expoſing the turpitude and atrocity of Deacon Kennedy's argument; to have declared, that he agreed with me in reprobating the bargain made on that deteſtable principle; and after diſclaiming it in the ſtrongeſt terms, to have proceeded to ſtate and illuſtrate fully his own new prin-

ciple and noble diſcovery, that Surgeons have no need of experience, and can be no better for it.

As the moſt concluſive fact and argument that I can mention, in proof that I neither miſrepreſented nor wiſhed to miſrepreſent the character and conduct of the Junior Members of the College of Surgeons, I ſhall ſtate one curious particular with reſpect to the behaviour of two of them on this occaſion. I do it with peculiar pleaſure, becauſe I think their behaviour has done them very great honour. It would be improper here to mention their names; thoſe whom it moſt concerns, and probably ſome others, will underſtand perfectly to whom and to what I allude.

From the experience which I have had of them and they of me, I am ſure that no Members of their College can be leſs inclined than theſe two are to do any thing kind or obliging to me. None can think more unfavourably of me, both in point of underſtanding and candour, than they have publicly and in print declared that they did; the one I mean as the author of a certain anonymous pamphlet, the other as his intimate confidential friend, who knew and approved of the compoſition and publication of it.

In that pamphlet I was reproached, in very bitter and ſarcaſtic terms, with groſs ignorance, bad reaſoning, and ſhameful diſingenuity, no leſs, indeed, than ſuppreſſing part, and conſequently miſrepreſenting the whole, of the doctrine of a celebrated philoſopher, whoſe opinions I had taken the liberty to controvert.

It would be impertinent here to mention the ſubject of our controverſy; but it is proper to ſay, that it did not in the leaſt relate either to Phyſic or Surgery.

As I am never in the leaſt diſpoſed to be angry in ſuch controverſies, and generally am much gratified and amuſed, when I find myſelf *unjuſtly* charged with doing wrong, which I knew was the caſe at that time, I made a fair and calm attempt, which probably the author of the pamphlet little expected, to convince him of the groſs

groſs injuſtice that he had done me, and of ſome of the many errors of his own reaſonings. Both theſe points I *knew* I could eſtabliſh in ſuch a manner as to preclude all rational diſpute about them.

I was tempted to make the trial, becauſe I obſerved, on reading the pamphlet, ſome evident proofs of quickneſs and acuteneſs in the author of it, and a good ſpecimen of knowledge of at leaſt one branch of ſcience, Chemiſtry. His defects and his faults, of which his pamphlet amply teſtified, ſeemed to me ſuch as might eaſily be ſupplied and corrected. The petulance of his ſtyle, and the ſtrange injuſtice he had done me, I imputed to great youth and total inexperience, which faults are more generally mended than any others that I know of. The errors in his reaſonings, which were ſuch as to ſhew total ignorance of the firſt principles of demonſtrative reaſoning, (logical or mathematical), I was ſure could proceed from nothing but a defect in his education; for I have had occaſion to ſee many examples of the ſame kind. Much as I diſtruſt what is commonly called metaphyſicks, I was confident that as ſoon as I ſhould point out to him the well eſtabliſhed principles of reaſoning, which he had unknowingly violated, he would find it *impoſſible* to diſpute them. As to his acknowledging his error, that, of courſe, was to be juſt as he pleaſed; it was entirely his buſineſs, not mine: I could ſuffer no evil from his not doing it; he might ſuffer a great deal.

I was encouraged to make the trial, by the circumſtance of his pamphlet being anonymous, and my not knowing who the author was, nor even ſuſpecting that he lived in Edinburgh; for his work was publiſhed in London. I thought I had a better chance of meeting with patient and candid attention from an unknown author who had got into ſuch a ſcrape, than from one whoſe name was publicly known, and who, of courſe, would probably make it

a point of honour not to acknowledge his error, however groſs, or however clearly pointed out to him.

I wrote to the unknown author of the pamphlet, committing my letter to the care of his London bookſeller and publiſher. I remonſtrated with him, but in very mild terms, on the raſhneſs and impropriety of his conduct towards me, and even of the injuſtice he did me, in publiſhing ſuch a work, without allowing me to ſee it, at leaſt after it was in print, and to have an opportunity, either of acknowledging the error of my reaſoning, if ſuch error was pointed out to me, or of giving him my reaſons for thinking that his reaſoning, not mine, was erroneous. Such was the tenor of the offer I had made to all whom it might concern, when I publiſhed that book which he had treated ſo roughly. But that offer, though ſurely a very candid, and not a very common one, he had thought fit to diſregard.

I told him in my letter, what muſt have been very ſurpriſing to him, and, if he believed it, very mortifying alſo, that his great objection to my argument, the one on which he ſeemed chiefly to value himſelf, and on which he had founded his ſevere charge of ſuppreſſing part of the doctrine of my adverſary, and conſequently miſrepreſenting the whole of it, was not new to me; that it had been ſuggeſted to me by a gentleman of diſtinguiſhed talents, to whoſe reviſion, as well as to that of many others, I had ſubmitted my work long before it was publiſhed. I told him the name and character of this gentleman, which *muſt* have convinced him that there was no *wilful diſingenuity* in my reaſonings. To the beſt of my remembrance, but I am not quite ſure of this, I offered to let him ſee that gentleman's letter, containing the ſame objection which he (the anonymous author) had urged ſo ſtrongly againſt my work; and told him, that the reaſon why that objection, and my anſwer to it, were not publiſhed in the appendix to my book, was, that the

author

author of the objection, when I aſked his permiſſion to publiſh it with my anſwer to it, did not chooſe to allow it to be publiſhed, being convinced *at once*, whenever he heard even the *beginning* of my anſwer to it, that he was miſtaken on that point, that his objection was untenable, and that my anſwer to it was fair and complete.

I offered, if he would allow me, without ever knowing or enquiring about his name, of which I aſſured him I had no gueſs or ſuſpicion, to correſpond with him on the ſubject of his pamphlet, and to point out to him what I conceived to be the errors of his reaſonings. I think I promiſed to him, that any objections or anſwers to his argument that I might give him in writing, ſhould be ſuch only as I was afterwards to print and publiſh; and that I ſhould print nothing that he might give me in writing without his own expreſs conſent; and that I ſhould return him his papers if he pleaſed.

After many weeks, I received an anſwer from my anonymous adverſary, acknowledging the receipt of my letter, and my propoſal *ſeemingly* ſo candid; telling me, that I might probably ſoon learn his name, and therefore incloſing a ſealed paper containing his name, which paper he told me I might open, if I choſe to carry on the correſpondence which I had propoſed.

Buſineſs much more intereſting to myſelf than a philoſophical controverſy with an anonymous author, who ſeemed reſolved, right or wrong, to put the moſt unfavourable conſtruction poſſible on every thing that I ſaid or did, worſe even than I ſhould have thought poſſible, and who choſe to doubt of my candour (as I judged from his moſt characteriſtic adverb *ſeemingly*) when I made him the moſt unequivocally candid offer that one man could make to another, prevented me from writing to him for many months. Before I found leiſure to write to him, I was informed, by his confidential friend, with his conſent, of his name.

I had the honour of the company of them both together one day in my houſe, by invitation. I put into his hands his own ſealed paper, containing his name, unopened, as I received it, that he might ſee I had made no improper uſe of that confidence which he had put in me. I had intended to ſend him back that paper unopened, along with the firſt ſpecimen of my mode of replying to his pamphlet, and let him then chooſe whether he would let me know his name or not.

I put into his hands a few of many letters that I had received from different men of ſcience, who had read my book before it was publiſhed, and who had given me their remarks on it; ſuch letters as *muſt* have convinced him that there was no diſingenuity or intended ſuppreſſion or miſrepreſentation on my part, and *might* have convinced him that he, not I, was miſtaken with reſpect to the import of a certain doctrine, about which we had differed ſtrangely, while I endeavoured to refute, and he to maintain it. I ſuſpect that if he did not ſee clearly, he at leaſt had a glimpſe of what was implied in thoſe letters; for though he had at firſt very candidly acknowledged the impropriety of his conduct, in publiſhing his pamphlet without allowing me previouſly to ſee it, I obſerved that he went no farther, and did not expreſs any ſenſe of having done me injuſtice, or of having fallen into any error in his own reaſonings. Indeed he maintained ſo ſtrict and cautious a reſerve, that I could not have known, from any thing that he ſaid, whether he even underſtood what I ſaid to him on any one of the points about which we differed.

If I had obſerved this reſerve on his part on one or two points only, I ſhould have ſuppoſed that he really did not underſtand me, and of courſe ſhould have endeavoured to explain and illuſtrate my meaning more fully than I did at firſt. But as his reſerve was uniform on every point that became the ſubject of diſcourſe, even on that great one which I had mentioned to him in my letter, which had

had been anticipated by another gentleman, whoſe letter I ſhewed him, and which had been cleared up to that gentleman's ſatisfaction, by an explanation and anſwer, that I gave in the ſame very few words to my gueſts, as he had underſtood at once and been ſatisfied with, I judged that the reſerve which I thought ſo remarkable was the reſult of prudence, and a reſolution, which I could not blame, to make no raſh conceſſion.

As it would have been rude and inhoſpitable to urge my gueſt any farther on ſuch a ſubject, I turned the diſcourſe to other ſubjects at that time; but, in a few weeks after, I gave him in writing a ſmall and *gentle* ſpecimen of the errors of his reaſoning, carefully avoiding any mention of his violations of the fundamental principles of reaſoning, and ſelecting for the ſubject of my remarks the moſt luminous paſſage in his pamphlet, the one which I preſume he himſelf was moſt delighted with, and certainly the one which had afforded me the greateſt entertainment. It was indeed ſuch a paſſage as, if it had been introduced in a *viva voce* debate, and in an anſwer to which there could be no reply, would have been thought perfectly concluſive in point of argument, and an admirable ſpecimen, not only of a lively imagination, but of great quickneſs and acuteneſs in reaſoning.

It was a kind of parody, or very cloſe imitation, of a peculiar mode of reaſoning which I had employed, and in which the ableſt men of my acquaintance, after conſidering it for ſeveral years, could find no error. The parody on it was evidently, what it was intended to be, ſtark nonſenſe; yet the reſemblance of it to my original ſerious argument was ſo cloſe and perfect in every reſpect but one, and this one, though very important, ſo little obvious to any perſon who had not maturely conſidered the ſubject, that I am convinced the author of the pamphlet, and probably ninety-nine in the hundred of his readers, never once thought of it, or ſuſpect-

ed that there was any omiſſion in the lively and ludicrous parody on my reaſoning.

As the ſubject was perfectly familiar to me, I perceived the omiſſion before I had read two lines of his propoſition, and could at once have explained to him, either in common or in mathematical language, what the difference was between his parody and my argument, and could have convinced him, that his muſt be nonſenſe, (which he meant it to be), even ſuppoſing mine to be a ſtrict logical or mathematical demonſtration.

This I did in the writing which I gave him, and which, after many months, he returned to me, with a reply preciſely of the ſame kind, in point of reaſoning, with his anonymous pamphlet. It contained another very cloſe parody on my argument in my reply to him, but with the ſame defect or omiſſion as in his former parody, and a repetition of his former violations of the beſt eſtabliſhed principles of reaſoning, with one or two additional ſpecimens of the ſame kind, equally indiſputable as it appeared to me, and equally characteriſtic of a great defect, not of underſtanding, but of education and knowledge.

As I had by that time gone too far to ſtop ſhort with him, I reſolved to ſhew him in one or two inſtances, or more if there ſhould be occaſion, what *indiſputable* errors in point of reaſoning he had committed. But firſt I took the precaution to hint to his friend ſeparately, that I ſuſpected my antagoniſt was very little acquainted with the principles of that kind of reaſoning which he had endeavoured to employ. At this ſurmiſe his friend ſeemed much aſtoniſhed, and no leſs indignant, and aſſured me *that* could not be: but on my aſking him to come to my houſe next morning, and there ſhewing him his friend's written paper, and calling his attention to two particular paſſages in it, I had the pleaſure to find, that he perceived the ſame errors in them which I had obſerved;

and

and this he did without my having occaſion to tell him what the errors were. One of thoſe errors he did not obſerve at firſt, but on my begging him to ſubſtitute arithmetical numbers for the algebraical ſymbols that his friend had employed, juſt by way of illuſtration, and then to obſerve the reſult, he diſcovered the error immediately. The other error to which I wiſhed to call his attention, he perceived at once, without any help or hint from me, though it certainly was leſs obvious than the former, as depending on a more abſtruſe general principle of ſcience, which the writer had unknowingly violated.

Having learned by ſome years experience how to deal with ſuch diſputants, ſo as to bring them to a full point, in my next paper I pointed out to the author of the pamphlet the omiſſion in his ſecond parody, the impropriety of conſidering a parody as a proper anſwer to an argument, and ſome of the many groſs violations of the fundamental principles of reaſoning that he had committed; and concluded my rejoinder to him nearly in theſe words: "From "what I have ſaid, you muſt be ſenſible that either you or I do "not know what ſtrict logical and mathematical reaſoning is. "What then, you may ſay, is to be done? Briefly this: conſider "patiently what I have ſtated: if you think me right, ſay ſo at "once, like a man of ſenſe and candour; if you think me wrong, "reviſe your own argument, make what corrections or improve-"ments in it you think neceſſary, and give it me in the form in "which you wiſh it to be publiſhed. I engage to print it exactly "in your own words, with my anſwer to it, on the principles "which you have ſeen."

This was the teſt which I had uniformly propoſed to all thoſe with whom I attempted to reaſon about my Eſſay, as the beſt or only proof that I could conceive of our arguing on both ſides with candour and honeſt love of truth; not for victory or diſtinction, or from mere pride and obſtinacy. With only one exception, and

this one of no conſequence, it had invariably anſwered my purpoſe. Of many perſons on whom I had occaſion to try it, only one had ſuch confidence in his objections, after ſeeing my anſwers to them, as to allow me to print them; and even this one would not put his name to his objections. Nor could I regard them as of any conſequence; for not only there were very groſs and indiſputable errors in his reaſonings, on one important point amounting to a perfect *Bull*, but there were in his diſcourſe ſeveral determined miſrepreſentations of my argument.

My uſual teſt ſucceeded perfectly with my antagoniſt, the author of the anonymous pamphlet; indeed it operated like a charm. In four and twenty hours I got back the papers, and along with them received from him a letter, in which he declined all further private correſpondence with me, deſired me to uſe what freedom I pleaſed with his printed pamphlet, but requeſted that his written papers might be committed to the flames. This requeſt, of courſe, was inſtantly complied with; though in burning them I at the ſame time burned about a third part of my own anſwer to them, which, for the ſake of eaſy and immediate reference, had been written on the alternate pages of his paper, that had by him been left blank.

This curious correſpondence was going on between the months of January 1796 and October 1797. From that time to this my antagoniſt has not once ſpoken to me, or appeared even to know me when we met in the ſtreets, as we have done very often; and I dare ſay he never will ſpeak to me again: nor do I wiſh that he ſhould; for though I bear him no ill-will, and ſhould be very glad to have an opportunity to convince him of that by doing him any good office in my power, yet I hold myſelf indiſpenſably bound, the more ſo for what I have here ſtated, to diſſect and anatomiſe his pamphlet *ſecundum artem*. But it ſhall be done in ſuch a manner, that he ſhall find neither ſuppreſſion nor miſrepreſentation, nor any kind of diſingenuity in my diſcourſe.

His

His friend has not thought it neceſſary to carry his reſentment quite ſo far; we ſpeak when we meet, but not on that tender ſubject; and I had the pleaſure of receiving a moſt edifying letter from him, along with the papers and the letter from the author of them deſiring me to burn them, and declining all further correſpondence with me. In this letter he (the friend of the author) had the goodneſs to tell me, that he thought the author perfectly right in every thing that he had written, and in declining all further intercourſe with me, conſidering the tone of my laſt paper to him. This was the more edifying to me, that it ſeemed to imply his having diſcovered, that thoſe very points were *right* which he had perceived or thought, as I had thought, to be notoriouſly and indiſputably *wrong*.

Even from this brief account of our correſpondence it may be judged, that thoſe two gentlemen were not much diſpoſed to hurt their conſciences in order to gratify me; and it may fairly be preſumed, that they would rather have gone to the utmoſt limit that conſcience would allow them to thwart and ſpite me. But what I have ſtated is not the worſt of it: My Eſſay, which the author of the pamphlet choſe to run his head againſt with ſo little ceremony, was in its nature and object the moſt provoking and unpardonable work that ever appeared in ſcience. It was compoſed and publiſhed *avowedly*, not only to detect a favourite ſophiſm, and an error in ſcience, which many modern philoſophers have maintained with the greateſt arrogance, but alſo to expoſe them to reproach and ridicule, by ſhewing demonſtrably that they had never believed it. In ſhort, I undertook both to detect their ſophiſm, and to convict them of falſehood. This had very generally been ſuſpected, and even ſaid; but the means of proving it had not occurred to any perſon before me.

Conſcious, on the one hand, that I meant only ſtrictneſs and ſeverity, but no injuſtice or diſingenuity, to any individual, or to any

any ſet of men; and perfectly aware, on the other hand, what general contempt and juſt reproach I muſt have brought on myſelf if I failed in my argument, and in the provoking inference which I deduced as a corollary from it; or even if I did not allow my antagoniſts every poſſible opportunity of vindicating themſelves, and refuting my argument; I carefully, for many years, took all the precautions that I have already mentioned, and gave to thoſe whom it concerned the moſt ample opportunities of vindicating themſelves. But every experiment of this kind, while it was a ſort of trial of the validity of my reaſoning, was as certainly and directly a trial of the underſtanding and veracity of the perſon on whom it was made. It was really a trial, as they muſt generally have felt, whether they could even *attempt* to vindicate themſelves, and refute my argument, without affording additional and moſt convincing proof of every thing that I had ſaid unfavourable of them, either in point of judgment or candour. And this ungracious kind of teſt was the only proof I ever could expect to have from them that they found my reaſoning valid, and my harſh inference with reſpect to them juſt and irrefragable; for, ſuppoſing me to have been right in every reſpect, and them to have been ſenſible of it, I was ſure they would never acknowledge it.

But the author of the anonymous pamphlet ſtood in a very peculiar ſituation, and the worſt of all.

Notwithſtanding his own confident general aſſertions of his belief, I could eaſily have vindicated him in point of veracity, by ſhewing, even on the evidence of the particulars ſtated in his own pamphlet, that the doctrine for which he contended ſo ſtrenuouſly was not the one which I had undertaken to refute; and conſequently, that my arguments and concluſions did not in the leaſt affect him or his reaſonings. Nay, I was ready to have told him, that I ſhould never diſpute, and that if, on mature deliberation, he thought it worth while to contend for his own doctrine, or

thought

thought it of any conſequence, I ſhould admit it in its full extent, as ſtated by himſelf. But ſuch vindication of his veracity muſt have been moſt grievouſly at the expence of his knowledge and underſtanding; for, in the firſt place, I muſt have ſhewn that he had never underſtood that doctrine of which he was proud to declare himſelf an apoſtle, and had not even known the fundamental principle of it; ſecondly, I muſt have ſhewn him that his own doctrine was a perfectly nugatory propoſition, as involving a condition that never was and never can be realiſed; juſt like the vulgar ſaying, "when the ſky falls we ſhall catch larks:" ſo that though, ſtrictly ſpeaking, as a propoſition it *muſt* be either *true* or *falſe*, and, in my opinion, would be *true*, yet it never could be tried or verified as a matter of fact; and, if it were verified, never could be of the ſmalleſt conſequence in ſcience, or even interfere with the propoſition which I had undertaken to demonſtrate. This, indeed, was ſo obviouſly implied in the anſwer which I had mentioned to him, as what I had given to another perſon who had ſtated the ſame ſuppoſed objection to my reaſoning, that I can ſcarce doubt that he perceived it, and on this account did not chooſe to have any further diſcuſſion about it. Thirdly, All the mortifying remarks on his violations of the principles of reaſoning or ſcience which he had to expect from me, muſt have come upon him with tenfold force, when it appeared that he had been contending for next to nothing, or, at beſt, for he knew not what.

In ſhort, I do not believe it poſſible for any combination of circumſtances to have occurred tending more to irritate two men againſt a third, of whom they previouſly had an unfavourable opinion, and whom they wiſhed to mortify, and expoſe to public reproach and contempt.

It was impoſſible that they ſhould have expected any favour or kindneſs from me, or ſhould have ſuppoſed that any good was intended to them, or could be done to them by my Memorial. Nay,

they

they would have had ſome excuſe, which neither Mr John Bell nor any of his adherents could have, for doing me the injuſtice (and very great injuſtice it would have been to me) of ſuppoſing that I had ſome perſonal ill-will to them, and that I wiſhed to do them an injury, by excluding them from attending in the Infirmary.

Yet, in theſe moſt trying circumſtances, they have had the magnanimity to ſacrifice all conſiderations of private reſentment and diſlike, and to ſupport me zealouſly in an undertaking which they *knew* to be right, and for the public good. This conduct has raiſed them much in my opinion: and it is fit I ſhould ſay ſo; for if they had acted otherwiſe, I ſhould have been ſtrongly tempted to impute their oppoſition to their animoſity againſt me, not to any honeſt difference of opinion with reſpect to the ſubject of my Memorial. Both of them had received a great part of their education as clerks in the Royal Infirmary, and muſt have known the truth of all that I had ſtated, and of many painful particulars which I ſhould be very ſorry to be obliged to ſtate.

I regard their conduct on this occaſion as a very high degree of virtue; the more to be eſteemed that ſuch examples are rare: while too frequent experience muſt convince us all, that many perſons cannot diveſt themſelves of perſonal animoſity, even in the exerciſe of an important public truſt, or in the diſcharge of the moſt ſacred duty.

Another paſſage in thoſe letters, which Mr John Bell has very wiſely prefixed to his anſwer to my Memorial, deſerves ſome animadverſion. It is in his own circular letter to thoſe younger Surgeons who had employed him to write that anſwer. It is in theſe words: " The opinion of the *profeſſion* has been publicly and " ſtrongly expreſſed. The *conſtitutional* point has been *decided* by " *repeated votes* of the Royal College of Surgeons."

The former of theſe propoſitions is unqueſtionably true in its full extent; perhaps to nearly double that extent which Mr John Bell wiſhed

wiſhed to be underſtood or known. For not only one opinion, that one I mean which he had in view, but another opinion alſo, diametrically oppoſite and contradictory to it, has been *publicly* and *ſtrongly* expreſſed, by the *Profeſſion*, as he calls it, that is, by the Surgeons of Edinburgh. No fewer than *fourteen* out of *twenty-nine* Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, who were preſent at a memorable debate and vote of that College, on the ſubject of their mode of attendance in the Infirmary, expreſſed *publicly* and *ſtrongly* an opinion perfectly coinciding with mine, and *proteſted* againſt the oppoſite opinion, that of the fifteen other Fellows, as irreconcileable with the good of the patients. Of theſe fourteen many are men of the higheſt eminence that have ever been of their profeſſion in this city, and have long enjoyed the greateſt ſhare of public eſteem and confidence; and all of them are thoroughly acquainted with the ſubject, and with many particulars of thoſe evils which I had ſtated only in general terms. Many of them had received their education in the Infirmary as clerks; and almoſt all of them had attended and operated in their turn, ſome of them repeatedly. All of them muſt often have been eye-witneſſes of thoſe evils, the knowledge of which, as reſulting from the ſyſtem of rotation, made them ſo emphatically declare it bad for the ſick poor. But of this more fully afterwards: at preſent I ſhall only obſerve, that though thoſe gentlemen, whoſe opinion publicly and ſtrongly declared Mr John Bell ſeems to hold as nothing, when taken by *tale* were the minority of their College, at that ever memorable meeting, in the proportion of fourteen to fifteen; yet I humbly conceive, that if taken by *weight* they would have been the majority of it, in the proportion of at leaſt four to one.

The latter of the two ſentences quoted from Mr John Bell's circular letter is hardly intelligible. I cannot even gueſs why, or in what ſenſe, the ſubject of their debates and votes ſhould be called a *conſtitutional* point. With infinitely more propriety, and ſome ra-

tional meaning, it might have been called oſteological, or cutaneous, muſcular, or ſanguinary; for it is plain that it concerns much more nearly the bones, and ſkin, and fleſh, and blood, of the ſick poor, than it does the conſtitution of this country, according to the meaning uſually attached to the phraſe *conſtitutional point.*

But be the point conſtitutional or ſanguinary, or what they chooſe to call it, for I hate to diſpute about words, I have not the honour to underſtand how, or in what poſſible ſenſe, it can be ſaid to have been *decided* by repeated votes of the Royal College of Surgeons. It is the very firſt time I knew that any body ſuppoſed that a party in a cauſe was to *decide* that cauſe, or any one point of it, by his own vote, however often repeated. To me it appears, that the Royal College of Surgeons, by their repeated votes, had only *decided* that they would try that point; in plain Engliſh, that they would go to law; which, in general, is thought by no means a difficult problem. It has by many people been found much eaſier to get *into* a lawſuit than to get *out* of one.

———*In regna Lavini*
Dardanidæ venient; mitte hanc de pectore curam:
Sed non et veniſſe volent. Bella, horrida Bella,
Et Tybrim multo ſpumantem ſangnine cerno.

It is wonderful that Mr John Bell, who has got at his command a vaſt ſuperfluity of texts of Scripture, as appears by his applying them ſo laviſhly on all occaſions, to the purpoſe and not to the purpoſe, ſhould have overlooked, or not underſtood, the well known text of the Apoſtle Paul; "Know ye not, brethren, (for I ſpeak to "them that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over "a man as long as he liveth?" I truſt our Edinburgh lawyers will give him and his clients a good commentary on that text.

That the Royal College of Surgeons ſhould have determined (even

(even by that very ſmall majority) to diſpute the point with the Managers, and to contend for the bargain of 1738, was matter of ſurpriſe and ſorrow to many others as well as to me. It is impoſſible not to ſpeculate a little about it, and try to form ſome conjectures about the cauſe of ſuch a marvellous phenomenon; the more marvellous ſurely that they have publicly and ſtrongly diſavowed the only reaſons which their predeceſſors *aſſigned*, or, as I firmly believe, *had*, for making that odious bargain with the Managers; I mean, the proſpect of great improvement to the younger members of their College, by their being allowed to practiſe in the Infirmary; and preſerving an equality among the Surgeons, by preventing a few of them from acquiring high improvement and reputation, and a large ſhare of the moſt lucrative practice, in conſequence of their permanent attendance, and daily performing of operations in the Hoſpital.

The moſt obvious account of ſo ſtrange a phenomenon is this. It appears, from their conduct and their printed memorial, that about the time when that bargain was made, the Devil had taken full poſſeſſion of a large majority of the Corporation of Surgeons; and that he had endowed them plenteouſly with his own malignant ſpirit. Further, it appears by what paſſed thirty years after, in the courſe of the long conteſt between the Managers of the Infirmary and the Corporation of Surgeons, that the Devil ſtill kept poſſeſſion of the latter, or at leaſt of a great majority of them, as his own peculiar flock. Even ſo lately as 1792, when Dr Duncan made an attempt to get that horrible abuſe corrected, againſt which I remonſtrate, it is plain from the "*terrible noiſe*" which ſome of them began to make, that the Devil was ſtill in them, and by no means diſpoſed to go out of them. Now, theſe things being ſo, it is very natural to ſuppoſe, that the ſame evil ſpirit ſtill continued in them, and had deſcended unimpaired from Mr Kennedy to ſome of his worthy ſucceſſors; juſt as we read in Scripture, that when a

great prophet of old was taken up into heaven in a chariot of fire, his ſpirit as well as his mantle deſcended to his humble follower. " And when he alſo had ſmitten the waters, they parted hither " and thither; and Eliſha went over. And when the ſons of the " prophets, which were to view at Jericho, ſaw him, they ſaid, " The ſpirit of Elijah doth reſt on Eliſha. And they came to meet " him, and bowed themſelves to the ground before him."

It is ſo reaſonable, on all occaſions, to impute every thing that is peculiarly bad to the immediate agency of the Devil, and this account of the matter, in the preſent caſe, is ſo obvious and plauſible, that every body would admit it at once as ſatisfactory and certain, were it not for ſome conſiderations which I have already ſtated. But theſe have ſo much weight, that they make me doubt, or more than doubt, of that moſt natural account of the buſineſs, and ſuggeſt to me another explanation of it, which I am convinced will be found the true one.

Before my Memorial was printed, or indeed written, I had learned, by converſing with ſome of the moſt eminent of the Surgeons, that they reprobated the ſyſtem of their attendance in the Hoſpital by rotation, and the bargain, and the ſubſequent conduct of their predeceſſors, as much as I did. It was impoſſible not to preſume the ſame of other gentlemen of the ſame education and profeſſion, and who muſt have had equal knowledge of thoſe facts on which that opinion was founded.

Even when diſappointed in this expectation, I had the pleaſure to perceive, that no body attempted to adopt or vindicate the principles and arguments on which Mr Kennedy and his aſſociates reſted their claim. This implied, that all the preſent Members of the College of Surgeons perceived the turpitude of the ſordid cruel principles on which their predeceſſors had acted, and which they had avowed; in other words, that all the preſent Members were men of more humane and liberal ſentiments and manners than their predeceſſors

deceſſors had been. It was not eaſy to conceive how or why they ſhould contend for the bargain itſelf, when none of them could avow the principles on which it was made. But this is fully explained, and well illuſtrated, by the conduct of Mr John Bell, and chiefly by the card which he did me the honour to addreſs to me, when he had only heard of my Memorial, but had not read it. From that card, which is printed in this paper, (page 34. to 36.), it appears indiſputably, that if he had been acting as an individual, upon his own judgment and knowledge, he would have left the deciſion of the buſineſs to the Managers, as the conduct moſt becoming a gentleman, and as eſpecially proper in a profeſſional man.

I preſume with confidence, that every one of his adherents or clients who have employed him to write for them, if he had been acting for himſelf, unconnected with any party, and not in oppoſition to any, would have thought and acted juſt as Mr John Bell had wiſely reſolved to do. Indeed it is incredible that any individual, acting for himſelf ſingly, ſhould have engaged in ſuch a diſpute, or contended for ſuch a bargain.

I ſhall take the liberty to ſtate an imaginary, but very conceivable caſe, and to conſider what the probable or certain reſult of it would have been. I ſhall ſuppoſe that (the Devil having entered into them) all the Members of the *oppoſite* party in the College of Surgeons, Meſſ. Allan, Benjamin and George Bell, Bennett, Brown, Inglis, Latta, Law, Newbigging, Rae, Ruſſell, Thomſon, Wardrop, Andrew Wood, had reſolved keenly and rigorouſly to inſiſt upon the bargain of 1738. Can we believe, that in this caſe Mr John Bell and his clients ſhould individually have done violence to their own clear judgment, (perhaps I ought to add conſcience too), and joined cordially with a ſet of men with whom they have long been engaged in the moſt inveterate warfare? Or ſhall we ſuppoſe that they would all have acted according to the beſt of their judgment, and

ſtill

ſtill preſerved their oppoſition to their adverſe party, by cordially ſupporting the meaſure which I had recommended?

The latter ſuppoſition appears to me abundantly probable; the more ſo, that the former is abſolutely incredible, and inconſiſtent with any competent knowledge of human nature. Party-men, of any ſpirit and talents, would rather ſee their opponents hanged, than unite with them in doing what they know to be right; *a fortiori*, then, much rather than unite with them in doing what they know to be wrong.

On the whole, therefore, I think I have much reaſon to believe, that the conduct of Mr John Bell and his clients, on this occaſion, does not proceed from any undue influence of the old Serpent of the days of Deacon Kennedy and Co. but from the noble ſpirit of party; that ſpirit to which we owe our greateſt orators, and patriots, and ſtateſmen, and, in a great meaſure, our glorious Conſtitution itſelf. The only doubt that now remains is, whether this noble ſpirit of party may not be the Devil in diſguiſe: but this will ſoon be aſcertained; for though it is well known that he can aſſume any ſhape he pleaſes, it is alſo well known, and very lucky it is, that he cannot conceal his cloven foot.

A MUCH more pleaſing ſubject of animadverſion, or rather of admiration and praiſe, comes next under review; I mean the very judicious and ſkilful manner in which Mr John Bell has acquitted himſelf, and the extraordinary talents that he has diſplayed, in his newly aſſumed character of an Advocate, and in the conduct of a very difficult and moſt ungracious cauſe, in which he engaged with reluctance, and againſt his own original and better judgment.

Experienced Lawyers, and Judges, (who know it to their ſorrow), need not be told, but the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, who

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are not much accuſtomed to be addreſſed as judges, and who probably have not fully perceived the plan and merit of his argument, ought to be informed, that the great point in arguing any cauſe, and eſpecially ſuch a cauſe as Mr John Bell has undertaken, and conſequently the greateſt merit that a lawyer *can* have, is to avoid, as much as poſſible, entering into the merits of the cauſe, which might be very dangerous for his clients; and to enlarge on any thing, or every thing, that has no connection with it. This gives full ſcope to a lawyer's genius, and never fails to raiſe him greatly in the opinion of his brethren and of the public; and it is very much *in commodum curiæ*, by convincing people how unfit they are to argue their own cauſes.

I have no doubt that Mr John Bell would, by his own natural ſagacity, have diſcovered this great principle of all juridical eloquence, without the aid of any information or inſtruction, or hint or example; and that, by the mere force of his own genius, he would, even in his firſt attempt, have carried that moſt valuable kind of eloquence to the higheſt poſſible perfection. But he hath followed ſo cloſely the noble pattern of ſuch legal eloquence given by that moſt authentic traveller and profound philoſopher *Lemuel Gulliver*, that it is more than probable he had that model in view; and he could not have choſen a better. But when we conſider alſo, that he is well acquainted with Gulliver's travels, as appears from his anſwer to me, and that the model of juridical eloquence is given in the voyage to the land of *Houyhnhms*; and that Mr John Bell muſt have been fully aware what he owed to ſo reſpectable a ſet of *Yahoos* as the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, to whom his argument was addreſſed, there can be no doubt what his model was.

In juſtice to him, and that the Managers, and all whom it concerns, may ſee how faithfully he has imitated, and how much he has ſurpaſſed his juſtly admired original, I ſhall tranſcribe *Gulliver's*

own

own words, before I quote the parallel paſſages in Mr John Bell's anſwer to me.

" I aſſured his Honour, that *law* was a ſcience in which I had " not much converſed, further than by employing advocates in " vain upon ſome injuſtices that had been done me; however, I " would give him all the ſatisfaction I was able.

" I ſaid there was a ſociety of men among us, bred up from " their youth in the art of proving by words, multiplied for the " purpoſe, that *white* is *black*, and *black* is *white*, according as they " are paid. To this ſociety all the reſt of the people are *ſlaves*. For " example, if my neighbour have a mind to my *cow*, he hires a " lawyer to prove that he ought to have my *cow* from me. I muſt " then hire another to defend my right, it being againſt all rules " of *law* that any man ſhould be allowed to ſpeak for himſelf. " Now, in this caſe I, who am the right owner, lie under two " great diſadvantages; firſt, My *lawyer*, being practiſed almoſt " from his cradle in defending falſehood, is quite out of his ele- " ment when he would be an advocate for juſtice, which is an " unnatural office he always attempts with great awkwardneſs, " if not with ill-will. The ſecond diſadvantage is, that my " *lawyer* muſt proceed with great caution, or elſe he will be " reprimanded by the *judges*, and abhorred by his brethren, " as one that would leſſen the practice of the law." —— " In " pleading, they ſtudiouſly avoid entering into the *merits* of " the cauſe; but are loud, violent, and tedious, in dwelling upon " all circumſtances which are not to the purpoſe. For inſtance, in " the caſe already mentioned, they never deſire to know what " claim or title my adverſary hath to my *cow*, but whether the " ſaid cow were red or black, her horns long or ſhort, whether the " field I graze her in be round or ſquare, whether ſhe was milked " at home or abroad, what diſeaſes ſhe is ſubject to, and the " like; after which they conſult *precedents*, adjourn the cauſe from

" time

" time to time, and in ten, twenty, or thirty years come to an " iſſue."

It is delightful to obſerve how admirably Mr John Bell has availed himſelf of theſe precious inſtructions. I doubt much whether the oldeſt or the ableſt lawyers at the bar could have done the buſineſs nearly as well.

The *merits* of the cauſe depended on the validity of a certain agreement or pretended contract between the Surgeons and the Managers, which I conceive to be illegal and null, as being a violation of the charter of the Infirmary, as well as inconſiſtent with the good of the ſick poor; and which, if it had been originally valid, has been repeatedly and groſsly violated by the Surgeons. To theſe conſiderations may be added, on the part of Mr John Bell, his avowed purpoſe of doing away (what he is pleaſed to call) thoſe groſs miſrepreſentations of the character and conduct of the younger Surgeons, contained in my Memorial.

As it would be tedious and laborious, and very unneceſſary, to tranſcribe and comment on *every* ſplendid paſſage in his Anſwer, which may juſtly be regarded as a good ſample of his genius for the practice of the law, I ſhall ſelect only a few, I truſt, of the beſt of them.

He has ſome admirable remarks on my *ſtature*, my *dreſs*, eſpecially my volunteer uniform, and my grenadier cap, at the hirſute appearance of which he ſeems to have taken umbrage, and on my writing Latin.

" Born in Brobdignag, and educated in Laputa, he deſpiſes us " as contemptible beings, inferior in ſize of intellects, and in bulk " of body. He ſteps over and over us, in all the pride of his gi- " gantic ſtature; and lifts aſide the lappets of his coat, to let us " paſs unhurt beneath the ſtride of his coloſſal limbs." *Sect.* 1. *page* 44.

" Though the Memorial is now a common property to all the

" world,

" world, it is particularly addreſſed to his fellow-citizens and fellow-
" ſoldiers; for he is a ſoldier, " in red, tremendous, and hirſute in
" gold." His Memorial has been diſtributed by tuck of drum to
" all the officers of this corps. Much of the wit is addreſſed to
" them, and all of it is at leaſt level to the plaineſt underſtanding."
Sect. 1. *page* 23, 24.

" Of the elegance with which he writes the Engliſh language,
" we have juſt given ſuch ſpecimens as muſt ſurely ſatisfy the
" moſt rigorous critic; but Latin he writes ſtill more fluently, and
" fluency is every thing in telling of tales.

" *Latin to him's no more difficile,*
" *Than to a blackbird 'tis to whiſtle.*"

Sect. 1. *page* 23.

Not content with all theſe and many more remarks, equally pertinent and witty, on me perſonally, he proceeds to make many remarks, almoſt equally pertinent, on my Father, and his character and writings; and draws an admirable contraſt between him and me. *Page* 50, 51.

He does not even confine himſelf to me and my Father, but contrives, with exquiſite ſkill, to bring in ſome alluſion to my family-hiſtory; and to mention the number of my Anceſtors who had been Profeſſors, (and full three times more than that number; but of this afterwards).

———" An author, diſtinguiſhed in the literary and polemical
" world, the *fifteenth* in a direct line of a dynaſty of Profeſſors. No
" wonder that little men crouch under the hereditary ſceptre, wield-
" ed by his gigantic arm." *Page* 44.

Every one of theſe ſpecimens is an unqueſtionable proof of ſuperior genius. Men of ordinary talents would think it of no moment, with reſpect to the ſubject of my Memorial, and Mr John Bell's

Bell's anſwer to it, whether my anceſtors were Profeſſors or Ploughmen; whether my Father and I were juſt of the ſame character or not; whether I wrote Latin, or Engliſh, or broad Scotch; whether I occaſionally wore a red coat or a black gown, a fur cap or a three-cornered hat; and whether I am ſix feet high, or only four.

But as this laſt point has appeared of ſuch conſequence to Mr John Bell, it is proper to conſider it fully, and to endeavour, if poſſible, to ſet him right as to ſome things about which he ſeems to be miſtaken; eſpecially to ſatisfy him, that by my ſtature I never meant any injury or indignity to him or to his friends, whoſe bodies bear no reaſonable proportion to the great ſouls which they contain; as by the whole tenor of his diſcourſe he ſeems to have ſuppoſed that I did.

It muſt be owned, that we often ſee a very unequal diſtribution of ſoul and body. But I can by no means admit the doctrine which ſome very little philoſophers are eager to maintain, that the ſouls of men always are inverſely as the cubes of their ſtatures; for I have never ſeen any demonſtration of this important propoſition. I rather incline to the old orthodox opinion, ſo ably maintained by that great philoſopher and judge of human nature Serjeant Kite, That he who was born to be ſix feet high, was born to be a great man. I am even intereſted to maintain this doctrine in all its purity, as *that* is the only kind of greatneſs to which I make any pretenſions, and the only one that I am ſure no body will or can deny me. But I never thought of uſing that greatneſs to the annoyance of little men, or little great men, or of undervaluing them for their diminutive bodies. Nay, though of late I have added to my ſtature one cubit, by means of that unlucky grenadier-cap, the hirſute appearance of which ſeems to have irritated Mr John Bell more than I could have ſuppoſed, I muſt aſſure him ſolemnly, that it was not for the fooliſh and preſumptuous purpoſe of making myſelf look

greater, nor yet for the malicious purpoſe of making him and other little great men look leſs, than nature intended we ſhould do. It was purely for the good of my country; and accordingly, as ſoon as my country ſhall have no further occaſion for the ſervices of the ſaid hirſute cap, I ſhall lay it aſide with much more pleaſure than ever I put it on.

Every body in the leaſt acquainted with Mr John Bell muſt perceive and acknowledge at once, as I do, that he has ſoul enough, or more than enough, to animate four and twenty of the largeſt of his Majeſty's Beef-eaters. No wonder that ſo large a ſoul ſhould be ſomewhat reſtleſs and impatient, and even indignant, at being impounded in ſo ſmall, ſo very ſmall a body. *Æſtuat infelix anguſto limite.* And I think no body can blame it, I am ſure I do not, for being a little ſnappiſh ſometimes, when it ſees a parcel of great men-mountains, or rather fleſh-mountains, walking about, with ſcarce ſoul enough in them to ſerve the purpoſe of ſalt, and keep them from putrefying.

All the great poets, ancient and modern, from Homer down to Milton, have ſhewn a ſtrong partiality to heroes of the largeſt grenadier ſize. Milton, in particular, carried this partiality to a moſt extravagant pitch. But the faithful page of authentic hiſtory muſt convince every judicious and candid reader, that many of the greateſt men in all ages have been of ſmall ſtature. Alexander the Great, Auguſtus, Prince Eugene of Savoy, the Archduke Charles, Dumourier, nay Buonaparte himſelf, all have been little men. The greateſt hero that ever England has produced was of the ſmalleſt ſize of any that we read of in true hiſtory. I do not mean Lord Nelſon, though certainly a very great hero and a little man; but one much greater, and ſtill ſmaller, of whom we read in the Tragedy of Tragedies, which bears his name.

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Though ſmall his body be, ſo very ſmall
A chairman's leg is more than twice as big,
Yet is his ſoul as any mountain great;
And as a mountain once contain'd a mouſe,
So doth this mouſe contain a mighty mountain.
Let Macedonia her Alexander boaſt;
Let Rome her Cæſars and her Scipios ſhow;
Ireland her Os, her Macs let Scotland boaſt;
England ſhall boaſt no other than Tom Thumb!

But, unfortunately, he was cut off in the flower of his youth, and in his full career of glory, by the moſt calamitous and horrible fate that ever yet befell a mortal hero: he was ſwallowed by a red cow. *Specta juvenis, et omen quidem Dii prohibeant; cæterum in ea tempora natus es, quibus firmare animum expediat conſtantibus exemplis.*

Next to that eſſential merit ſo well explained by Gulliver, and ſo admirably exemplified by Mr John Bell in his Anſwer to my Memorial, without which it is plain there could be no pleadings or law-papers worth hearing or reading, the moſt important qualification that an advocate can have, is the talent of availing himſelf to the utmoſt of every *fact*, true or falſe, credible or incredible, poſſible or impoſſible, with which he is furniſhed; telling it in the beſt manner, placing it in the ſtrongeſt light, adorning it with the choiceſt flowers of eloquence, enforcing it with many ſtrokes of the ſublime and pathetic, ſuch as may rouſe the moſt ſtupid underſtanding, and melt the hardeſt and coldeſt heart; and finally, deducing from every fact ſo ſtated thoſe inferences which may ſerve his

his purpoſe, whether ſuch deductions be conſiſtent with, or repugnant to the rules of logic, and the ſuggeſtions of common ſenſe.

The truth or falſity of thoſe facts, with reſpect to the advocate, and the merit of his argument, are quite out of the queſtion. If every fact which he ſtates were as falſe as Mahomet's Alcoran, he cannot in the leaſt be blamed for that: on the contrary, he may be well entitled to the higheſt praiſe, for making the beſt uſe of ſuch *bad* facts; and if he ſhould think it worth his while to do any thing ſo uncivil and unprofitable, he would be well entitled to blame very much thoſe who furniſhed him with ſuch *bad* facts: in other words, if he choſe to play the fool, he would have an excellent opportunity of quarrelling with his beſt friends, I mean his clients, and their attornies, or agents, of whatever denomination. But this, I believe, is very ſeldom thought of, and much ſeldomer done; for every body knows that an advocate is not anſwerable for the truth of his facts, in point of veracity, like a witneſs, who, unleſs he be well paid for not doing it, ought to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. An advocate is employed, and generally paid, not for telling the truth, but for ſaying all that he thinks can avail his client. Nor is a lawyer in any degree anſwerable, like a judge, or a juryman, in point of underſtanding or probity, for the belief which he gives, or appears to give, to the facts in his client's caſe.

It is plainly the buſineſs of judges and jurymen, and of the oppoſite counſel, to find out, if they can, whether the facts ſtated be true or falſe; and generally it is the buſineſs of the advocate who ſtates them to prevent that from being found out, if he can. At any rate, every body knows that truth lies in a well; a very deep one it ſhould ſeem; for there are but few people the deep ſea lead of whoſe underſtanding can reach even half way to the bottom of it. It would therefore be very fooliſh for an advocate to throw away a great deal of time and pains in ſounding or diving for that

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ſame truth, which forty to one he will not diſcover, and which, if he ſhould unfortunately lay hold of it, he would be fain to let go in a trice, as finding it more cumberſome and dangerous than a mill-ſtone about his neck.

But in any kind of fine writing, as approaching to the nature of poetry, the ſacred right *quidlibet audendi*, is, if poſſible, ſtill more extenſively and more firmly eſtabliſhed; for the beſt of all poſſible reaſons, that any great ſolicitude about truth, or very ſtrict adherence to it even when known, would completely fruſtrate the chief object of ſuch compoſition, which, in general, is rather *delectare* than *prodeſſe*.

Thus, ſurely every reader of good taſte and judgment muſt be ſenſible, that the Iliad of Homer is a much nobler work than a complete collection of all the gazettes extraordinary that were publiſhed at Sparta and Mycenæ during the whole ten years of the Trojan war; and that the Odyſſey and the Æneid are much better than the original journals of Ulyſſes and Æneas.

Theſe general remarks on the nature and value of the facts generally ſtated in pleadings and memorials, and other law or law-like papers, and of the merit of an able advocate, in making an admirable uſe of very bad facts, I have taken the liberty to ſuggeſt to the Managers, before I point out to them a few of the many exquiſite inſtances of that kind of merit which are to be met with in Mr John Bell's anſwer to my Memorial, and which, without ſome ſuch preliminary explanation, they might ſcarce have underſtood, or admired as they ought to do.

If his anſwer had been addreſſed to experienced lawyers and judges, eſpecially if it had been in the form of a pleading by word of mouth, any ſuch explanation of the merit of it, or of the principles on which the merit of it ought to be eſtimated, would have been unneceſſary, and even impertinent. The merit of every ſentence of it would have been perceived and acknowledged at once, and very

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ſoon would have been ſuitably rewarded. If he had been a young lawyer, inſtead of being a young, or not a young Surgeon, and had pronounced ſuch a Philippic in the form of a pleading in any of the courts of Weſtminſter Hall, he would have been complimented by the Bench, admired and hated by the Bar, worſhipped by the Attornies, and in four and twenty hours would have received at leaſt four and twenty briefs, and twice as many retaining fees; for in the noble profeſſion of the law, ſuch ſuperior genius is ſoon and certainly and amply rewarded, with much ſolid pudding, as well as with abundance of empty praiſe; while in all the branches of our miſerable trade of Phyſic (including Surgery) the ſame ſuperior genius, though more admired, is ſcarce more liberally rewarded than plain truth and common honeſty. *Laudatur et alget* is too often the fate of both. To ſay the truth, that ſuperior genius does not appear to be of ſo much uſe in any branch of phyſic as it is in the practice of the law; for when a man is very ill of the aſthma and dropſy, or going to be cut for the ſtone, it is of no conſequence to him whether his phyſician or ſurgeon has or has not all the qualifications which would make an excellent Attorney-general; and it is of great conſequence to him that his phyſician or ſurgeon ſhould have certain other qualifications, of a totally different nature.

Though judges and lawyers, and all mankind who have occaſion to know them, are always very liberal of their praiſes and admiration of ſuch pleadings as Mr John Bell's anſwer to me, yet, in point of belief, they pay no more regard to the facts ſtated in them, even to thoſe the moſt in point, than they do to the facts ſtated in Homer's Iliad, or in a London newſpaper. Of courſe, all the fine inferences from thoſe facts muſt go for nothing. Indeed, if the judges were ever ſo *willing* to believe *all* the *facts* which able lawyers ſtate in their pleadings, they *cannot* do it: For the facts ſtated by the oppoſite lawyers are ſometimes directly contradictory; ſo that if thoſe on the one ſide be true, thoſe on the other muſt be falſe; and

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if the former are falſe, the latter muſt be true. Sometimes the facts ſtated on the oppoſite ſides are only inconſiſtent, ſo that only *ſome* of them *can* be *true*, but *all* of them *may* be *falſe*, and moſt of them in ſome caſes are ſo.

Hence comes the neceſſity of what is called *evidence*, to entitle even the moſt ſtriking and pointed facts which a lawyer ſtates in his pleading to any credit. Now, evidence is in ſome caſes of a very ſtubborn nature; and ſo untractable, that, when raſhly produced, it eſtabliſhes inconteſtably the reverſe of what it was intended to prove. And a good deal of experience and acquired dexterity is neceſſary, to enable a lawyer to avoid ſtating any facts the reverſe of which may be *eaſily* proved; for example, by their inconſiſtency with authentic record, with themſelves, or with one another, or with common ſenſe. Mere force of genius can never inſpire a young pleader with this neceſſary caution; on the contrary, the ardour inſeparable from great genius will naturally urge him to the very oppoſite conduct, eſpecially in his firſt attempts.

Such, I conceive, has been the caſe with Mr John Bell as to *ſome* of the moſt ſtriking facts, and thoſe on which he ſeems to have laid the greateſt ſtreſs, in his anſwer to me.

With peculiar pleaſure I give, as the firſt ſpecimen of this kind, one ſhort ſentence, which contains four ſuch facts; or may fairly be reſolved into four ſeparate propoſitions, the direct contrary of every one of which may be eaſily and inconteſtably proved.

This admirable ſpecimen of his ſuperior genius occurs in the 49th page of his 2d ſection; where, after declaiming with more than Ciceronian or Demoſthenic fire and eloquence againſt the horrible abomination of Clinical Lectures, eſpecially when conducted by Profeſſors who are young men, and aſſerting roundly, that " the Chairs of this Univerſity are filled with young men, " very young men," he ſtates more particularly the following *facts*.

" The Profeſſorſhips of Chemiſtry, Anatomy, Midwifery, and " Materia Medica, are filled with men younger than the youngeſt " of thoſe whom this gentleman thinks fit to deſcribe as young and " inexperienced Surgeons."

Firſt, as to the Profeſſor of Midwifery; for he ſtands in a different ſituation from the other three profeſſors: He neither has, nor can have, any thing to do with the clinical lectures; ſo that whether he be only five years of age, or fifty-five, cannot concern the Infirmary. Beſides, it is now ſeveral years ſince the Infirmary was ſafely delivered of him and his big-bellied patients, to the great joy of the noble family. This happy delivery was accompliſhed in the time of the father and immediate predeceſſor of the preſent incumbent; not in conſequence of any proof or ſuſpicion of inſufficiency on his part, but purely on the ſtrong general principle of what the Managers knew to be right; what they might have foreſeen, but had really not foreſeen, when they permitted a lying-in ward in the Hoſpital; and were convinced of at laſt by very ample experience. But waving all ſuch diſcuſſions, I ſhall here conſider only Mr John Bell's *fact*, that the Profeſſor of Midwifery is *younger* than the *youngeſt* of thoſe whom I deſcribed as young and inexperienced Surgeons.

What the age of ſeveral of the Junior Surgeons is, I really do not know; but I know that one of them is juſt four and twenty, he having been born in February 1777. As there are no fewer than ſix Junior Surgeons under him in the liſt of that Royal College, I think it probable that ſome of theſe may be ſtill younger men. But taking, what I am ſure of, four and twenty as the age of one of the youngeſt Surgeons, I ſhall conſider whether it be credible or poſſible that the Profeſſor of Midwifery is younger than that, even by a day.

The preſent Profeſſor of Midwifery has been a Fellow of the Royal College of Phyſicians for *nine* years, as may be ſuppoſed very generally

generally known, for his name appears the laſt on our liſt of Fellows prefixed to the laſt edition of our Diſpenſatory, which is dated the 17th of April 1792. Before he could have been made a Fellow, he muſt have been a Licentiate of our College; and before he was made a Licentiate, he had obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the Univerſity of St Andrew's. If he be younger than four and twenty at preſent, he *muſt* have been a Doctor of Phyſic, and a Fellow of the Royal College of Phyſicians in Edinburgh, at or before the age of fifteen. This appears to me incredible at leaſt, if not impoſſible. But perhaps theſe facts may not have been known to Mr John Bell and his clients: at leaſt ſome other facts relating to that gentleman's hiſtory, and ſtill ſtronger, *muſt* have been well known to Mr John Bell, and probably to many of his clients. Before he became a Phyſician, and a Fellow of our College, he had been for between three and four years a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh. Before he was admitted a Fellow of their College, (which was on the 23d of June 1788), he had completed his education as a Surgeon, had been examined by their examinators, had been approved of, and (according to Mr John Bell's own doctrine, ſtrongly aſſerted in his anſwer to me) *muſt* have been perfectly well qualified to act as ordinary Surgeon of this Hoſpital. In fact he did attend, in his turn, in that capacity. All theſe things I conceive *muſt* have been well known to Mr John Bell, who became a Member of the College of Surgeons on the 14th of Auguſt 1786, near two years before the preſent Profeſſor of Midwifery, and muſt have been accuſtomed to hear the name of the latter called next but one after his own, at every meeting of their College, for at leaſt three years and a half. If he be at this time only four and twenty, he *muſt* have been a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1788, thirteen years ago, at the age of eleven, foraſmuch as eleven and thirteen make twenty-four; and he muſt have acted in his turn as ordinary Sur-

geon of this Infirmary at ſome period between the age of eleven and that of fifteen; at which latter age (according to Mr John Bell's *fact*, and the plain undeniable arithmetical calculation founded on it) he ceaſed to be a Surgeon and became a Phyſician. This inference appears to me incredible; but it is plain that Mr John Bell and his clients muſt either admit it, or give up their own important fact.

Next, as to the Profeſſor of Chemiſtry. Though I know his age pretty exactly, I do not chooſe to mention it too particularly, for he is ſtill a bachelor; but I truſt not long to remain in that ſinful ſtate. I ſhall therefore only ſay, that for his own ſake, and much more for that of the Univerſity of Edinburgh, I hope and truſt he is ſome years on the right ſide of forty. I can perceive no deficiency either of years or underſtanding in him; nor conſequently can I think it neceſſary (though certainly it can do no harm) to pray to Jupiter to increaſe his wiſdom and his beard. For my preſent purpoſe it is ſufficient to obſerve, that he has now been ſix winters Profeſſor of Medicine and Chemiſtry in this Univerſity, to which he was invited (as Dr Cullen and Dr Black had been before him) in conſequence of the well-merited reputation that he had acquired in the Univerſity of Glaſgow, where he had taught firſt chemiſtry, and afterwards medicine, for eight winters before, and where he had been Phyſician to the Infirmary from the time when it was built till he left that city. I ſhould therefore preſume that he might be truſted with the charge of twenty or thirty patients in this Infirmary, without any injury or any great riſk to them. But be this as it may, it is at leaſt plain, that if he be only four and twenty at preſent, he muſt have been but ten, or between ten and eleven years of age, when he firſt taught chemiſtry in the Univerſity of Glaſgow, near fourteen years ago. Thus I think we may ſafely diſpoſe of another of the four *facts*.

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As to the Profeſſor of *Materia Medica*, the *fact* with reſpect to him may be ſtill more eaſily and briefly ſettled. Far from believing that he is younger than the youngeſt of the Surgeons in Edinburgh, I doubt much whether all of theſe gentlemen had got into breeches when he was a Doctor of Phyſic. He took his degree of M. D. in this Univerſity September 12. 1781, full nineteen years and a half ago; ſo that if he be only four and twenty at preſent, he *muſt* have been made a Doctor of Phyſic by us before he was five years of age.

The fourth of the facts contained in that ſhort ſentence of Mr John Bell's paper which I am here conſidering, muſt be underſtood to relate, not to Dr Monro ſenior, but to his ſon Dr A. Monro junior, who has lately been appointed his father's colleague and ſucceſſor. Fortune ſeems indeed to have been wonderfully unfavourable to Mr John Bell and his clients on this occaſion; for even this fourth fact, the only one which had any appearance of being true, and which, on the fair principle of chance, ſhould have been *for* him, turns out *againſt* him. I find, on enquiry, that even Dr Alexander Monro junior is between three and four years paſt the age of four and twenty. Nor has fortune been much more favourable to him in another *fact* ſtated in the ſame paragraph, (page 50.), in theſe words: "Yet we cannot refrain from obſer-" ving, that the *youngeſt* of theſe Profeſſors, the Profeſſors of *Ma-*" *teria Medica* and Chemiſtry, do honour to the Univerſity." That theſe two Profeſſors do honour to the Univerſity, I cannot diſpute; but they certainly are not the *youngeſt* of the four Profeſſors whom he has ſpecified. The youngeſt of them is older by ſeveral years than the young Profeſſor of Anatomy.

Perhaps I ſhould have done better to have begun with the firſt ſentence of that paragragh, (page 49 of ſection 2.); for it is ſcarce inferior in rhetorical or poetical merit to the one which I have analyſed. Theſe are the words of it: "It happens that, at this very

" time,

" time, *the Chairs* of this Univerſity are filled with *young men*, *very* " *young*" men.

Of theſe *young*, *very young* men, it happens at this time that ſeveral are between ſixty and ſeventy years of age, many more between fifty and ſixty, and, to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, a great majority are paſt forty years of age. At preſent there are but *two*, and when Mr John Bell's pamphlet was written there was only *one*, out of five and twenty Profeſſors, under thirty years of age. I cannot tell exactly, nor is it of much conſequence, but I gueſs, that the average of the age of the preſent Profeſſors muſt be nearer fifty than forty. Now, as the age of man is but threeſcore years and ten, I humbly conceive that, without any violent breach of Chriſtian charity, we may rather be deemed middle aged than *young*, or *very young* men, at leaſt when taken collectively.

As to myſelf perſonally, I gladly admit, on the authority of Mr John Bell, that I am an exception to the general rule; and moſt gratefully acknowledge my obligations to him for the compliment which he has had the goodneſs to pay me, in his foreſaid 49th page, in theſe words: " Dr Gregory himſelf, *but a young man*, " boaſts of having occupied a moſt important ſtation in it for " twenty-four years." This very juſt obſervation is the more valuable, that it comes from one who evidently had no favour or partiality to me; and was the more acceptable, that I had been for ſome time much diſquieted in mind, in conſequence of having heard, that many very intelligent and experienced ladies had declared, *(horreſco referens)*, that every man of five and forty ought to be hanged.

I cannot therefore but lament, as well as wonder, that his bad luck, with reſpect to matters of fact, ſhould have attended him even on that point. By the happieſt conceit that ever entered into the head of a mortal wight, he ſtates the miſerable contraſt between me and my Father, (ſect. 1. page 50, 51.) There, after a ſuitable preamble,

preamble, he gives an excellent quotation from my Father's well-known Lectures on the Office and Duties of a Phyſician; and thus proceeds: "Serious duties will beget ſerious thoughts; but they "muſt be long familiar in the mind before they can be thus hap-"pily expreſſed. One plain word of this *good old man* marks a "feeling mind more than all the effuſions of ſenſibility that Sterne "ever contrived."

Every body, I preſume, will admit that my Father was a *good man*; and no body, I hope, will be ſo uncivil as to diſpute with Mr John Bell and his clients, (I am ſure, at leaſt, I ſhall not, ſuch is my eſteem and reſpect for them), that I am a *very bad man*, far worſe than Catiline, or Nero, or Ceſar Borgia, or Robeſpierre, or any the greateſt monſters that either ancient or modern times have produced; if they are pleaſed to ſay ſo, or if they think it will help their cauſe. But that my Father was an *old man*, and that I am a *young man*, is abſolutely impoſſible; for this plain reaſon, that my Father died juſt at the ſame age which I have now attained, namely, eight and forty. The lectures which Mr John Bell profeſſes to admire ſo much, were compoſed and actually read in the Univerſity of Edinburgh between ſix and ſeven years before his death; and had even been printed and publiſhed, ſo that they could no longer be read in College, two or three years before his death. On Mr John Bell's own principle, therefore, they muſt have been the words of a *good young man*.

It is not in the leaſt wonderful that a man ſhould fall into ſuch miſtakes when he writes about things of which he is totally ignorant; but the wonder is, that in this age of biography and anecdote, which ſeem to me to amount to an epidemic diſeaſe both among writers and readers, Mr John Bell ſhould be ignorant of what is ſo generally known, and has ſo often appeared in print. If he had taken the trouble to enquire, he might alſo have learned, that my Father was as arrant a Brobdignaggian as I am; and that

he

he wielded an immenſe club with his gigantic arm; in plain Engliſh, that he was a man ſix feet high, of a very robuſt make, and that he walked with a plain oaken ſtick in his hand; that he was equally plain in every part of his dreſs and manner; and that he, more than any other individual, contributed, both by his precept and example, to put an end to the ridiculous and diſgraceful peculiarities of dreſs and manner by which Phyſicians had long been diſtinguiſhed. Such peculiarities he treated with ridicule rather than with grave cenſure; ſo he did all violent medical controverſies and warfare, of which he had no better opinion than I have. Perhaps Mr John Bell and his clients, when they become a little better acquainted with my Father's writings, (which I earneſtly recommend to their peruſal, *nocturna verſate manu, verſate diurna*), will profit by his obſervations on that and on many other ſubjects; for example, by one which they will find in the moſt popular and beſt of all his works. There, after ſtrongly recommending the duties of humanity and charity, he adds; "But in this, as "well as in the practice of every other duty, carefully avoid oſten-"tation. Vanity is always defeating her own purpoſes. Fame "is one of the natural rewards of virtue. Do not ſeek her, and "ſhe will follow you."

This naturally reminds me of a very curious and modeſt requeſt of Mr John Bell, expreſſed in the note at the bottom of the 5th page of his 2d ſection, to make out the etymology of *Canting*. I am ſorry to ſay, that this point is not to be eaſily ſettled; for it has long been diſputed, and it is likely to be diſputed much longer, whether it be derived from the proper name of our worthy countryman Mr *Andrew Cant*, of whining memory; or whether it may boaſt a more noble deſcent from the Latin verb *canto*, to ſing. Luckily, however, it is not neceſſary, even for the purpoſe of *canting* in the higheſt perfection, to ſettle thoſe diſputes, nor yet to know the meaning or to have the uſe of the word. There muſt have

have been *canting*, before there could be any word to expreſs it; juſt as there muſt have been every other kind and figure of Rhetoric, before names could be given to them:

" *For all a Rhetorician's rules*
" *But teach a man to name his Tools*,"

as Mr John Bell, who ſeems to have dipped into Hudibras, can ſcarce fail to know. *Cant*, I believe, moſt ſtrictly and properly means " *a whining pretenſion to goodneſs.*" Of this I have never ſeen a finer ſample than Deacon Kennedy's Memorial about the Surgeons Hoſpital in 1737: but very little, if at all, inferior to it, in that kind of eloquence, is Mr John Bell's Anſwer to my Memorial in 1800. If, as his requeſt ſeems to imply, he really does not know what *canting* is, he may now ſhare the agreeable ſurpriſe of Moliere's Bourgeois Gentilhomme, when he learned from his rhetoric-maſter, that he had been ſpeaking *proſe* all his life without knowing it.

The next very ſplendid example of Mr John Bell's eloquence, and of his ſuperior talents as an Advocate, is his noble Philippic on my ignorance of Surgery. For the better underſtanding and reliſhing this admirable effort of his genius, it is proper to ſtate briefly what I had done in my former Memorial, in order to prevent any private or intereſted uſes, or malevolent applications, that might be made of my general obſervations on the badneſs of the long eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of Chirugical attendance in this Hoſpital. Conſcious that I meant nothing malevolent to the Surgeons collectively, or to any one of them individually; conſcious that I had no wiſh to favour any of them in preference to their brethren, and that my intentions were in every reſpect pure and honourable; but at the ſame time fully aware how eaſily my general remarks might be made a pretence for ſtating and enquiring into particu-

lar inſtances of thoſe evils which I repreſented as neceſſarily reſulting from the ſyſtem which I reprobated; and ſenſible that all ſuch particular enquiries were unneceſſary as well as odious; I took every precaution that I could think of to prevent them from being attempted, not only carefully avoiding them myſelf, but deprecating them in others, and proteſting againſt them in the ſtrongeſt terms, and endeavouring to ſhew, that the great point at iſſue ought to be determined purely on general principles, juſt as had been done fifty years before with reſpect to the mode of attendance of the Phyſicians. Conceiving too, that any ſuſpicion, however groundleſs, that I wiſhed either to favour or to injure any individuals of the Royal College of Surgeons, would in the firſt place have tended to fruſtrate my real benevolent purpoſe, and in the next place would have tended to make myſelf infamous, I endeavoured to preclude even the poſſibility of ſuch ſuſpicions, by declaring ſolemnly, that I was to take no ſhare in the election of Surgeons to attend permanently in the Infirmary; and even ſtating explicitly, that I had no pretenſions to be a judge of the real and comparative merits of the Surgeons of Edinburgh, eſpecially of the junior members of their College, from among whom I thought it probable the election would be made. I ſtated, (Mem. page 116.) that I had not been bred a Surgeon; that though I had been obliged, like other Phyſicians, to learn the general principles of Surgery, I never liked to ſee the practice of it; that I never am preſent at an operation in private practice, unleſs at the patient's particular deſire; that of courſe I ſee ſuch operations very ſeldom; that though intimately connected with the Infirmary as Clinical Profeſſor for more than three and twenty years, I had not in all that time gone to ſee any operation performed in it, except one day that I went to ſee Baron Wenzel operate on the eye; that there is not one of the junior Surgeons whom

whom I ever ſaw perform any greater operation than a common blood-letting; and that of courſe I know no more of their real and comparative merits, than I do of the qualifications of the Surgeons of Paris or Vienna.

Few men, I believe, perhaps not one in the world but Mr John Bell himſelf, could have made, or even have thought of making, ſuch a noble uſe as he has done of thoſe candid declarations of mine. His own peculiar and original genius, and his uſual bad luck with reſpect to all matters of fact, appear in every ſentence of his Philippic on this ſubject. (Anſwer, Sect. 3.).

" We are ſurpriſed at the warmth with which the Memorialiſt " expreſſes his tender feelings, where he could not feel. *He never* " *entered a Surgical ward, nor ſaw an operation.* If he had *even* " *for once* ſeen the ſufferings of a fellow-creature protracted, or " life itſelf endangered by ignorance, we could have pardoned all " the extravagance of his reflections, even while we felt their un- " truth;" (page 2d.) " He muſt write boldly who takes no " care about the truth of his allegations;" (N. B. Theſe are Mr John Bell's own words; not mine, as moſt readers would probably think), " and your Memorialiſt thinks good to take his facts on " credit, as he does his feelings. He *knows no Surgeons*; he has " ſeen *no operations;* he *never entered the wards* where thoſe daily " cruelties are perpetrated;" page 5. " He *never entered into your* " *Theatre* on that day which is a Sabbath of peace and eaſe to " all the world, except your unhappy ſubjects," &c. *Ibid.*

Fortune is really very unkind to Mr John Bell in theſe facts, of which he makes ſo excellent a uſe. With equal truth, and equal good ſenſe, he might have aſſerted, that I never entered an Hoſpital, or ſaw a patient, or felt a pulſe, or opened a book. Never having thought of keeping an account of the number of times that I have been in the Surgeons wards of the Royal Infirmary, I cannot ſay exactly, but I ſhould gueſs, that in the laſt

three and thirty years of my life, I have been many more than an hundred times in thoſe wards, juſt to ſee and enquire about patients whom I had ſent into them, or who had been particularly recommended to me. And I preſume I have been in them at leaſt as often in the courſe of three years that I attended the Hoſpital as a ſtudent. For though the practice of Phyſic was my chief object, I had curioſity at leaſt, if not ſenſe enough, to wiſh to ſee a little of the practice of Surgery. Not having kept an account of the number of operations that I ſaw performed in the Theatre of the Royal Infirmary, I cannot ſay exactly how many I ſaw performed there in the courſe of the ſame three years; but as I attended the Theatre of the Infirmary as regularly as moſt ſtudents during that time, and often ſaw *two*, ſometimes perhaps *three* operations in one hour, and this very commonly on Sunday, I ſhould gueſs that I muſt have ſeen at leaſt fifty, perhaps an hundred operations performed in that Theatre.

Mr John Bell goes on in the ſame ſtrain, (Sect. 3. page 45.) "The Memorialiſt tells us, he ſaw once the bloodleſs operation of "Baron Wenzel! There, we are ſure, he ſaw a laced ruffle and a "ſapphire ring:—but he never had the good fortune to ſee the "bold operations of a John Hunter, a Pott, a Deaſe, (the great "lithotomiſt), or of Mr Wood, the protector and encourager of "his younger brethren."

Still the ſame cruel bad luck with reſpect to matters of fact attends him in moſt of theſe particulars. He may, for aught I know, be right as to Baron Wenzel's lace ruffles and ſapphire ring. I remember nothing about them: but, if my memory does not very ſtrangely deceive me, I remember that he wore ſpectacles, that he ſeemed much embarraſſed while operating, partly I believe from the peculiarity of the light, and that he was unſucceſsful in his operations, of which there were two or three; and I remember well being told by Dr Rutherford, that he ſaw

Baron

Baron Wenzel operate in private, very ſoon after, with perfect ſteadineſs and complete ſucceſs.

Why Mr John Bell has introduced the name of John Hunter among thoſe of the London Surgeons whom I never had the good fortune to ſee operate, it is difficult to conceive. He would have been perfectly right with reſpect to *all* of them, if he had only had the good fortune to keep clear of John Hunter; for he was the *only* one of the London Surgeons that ever I ſaw operate. I was intimately acquainted with him, and had a very high opinion of his talents and truly original genius, and a ſtill higher opinion of the genius of his wife. He was the *only* operating Surgeon in London with whom I was acquainted. I was not his pupil, which, after I became acquainted with him, I regretted very much. I never heard even one of his lectures on Anatomy or Surgery. My acquaintance with him began at a moſt unmedical, unhallowed place, called the Britiſh Coffee-houſe. But I met with him often at St George's Hoſpital, to which he was Surgeon, and of which I was a perpetual pupil; and there, two or three times, but to the beſt of my remembrance not oftener, I ſaw him operate.

It is ſtill more marvellous, that Mr John Bell ſhould have ſpecified Mr Wood (meaning evidently Mr Alexander Wood) as one of the Surgeons whom I never had the good fortune to ſee operate. If he had taken the trouble to *think*, he might have known that Mr Wood was almoſt at the head of his profeſſion, and was eſteemed one of the beſt, if not the very beſt operator in Edinburgh, and that he was one of the *four ſubſtitute* Surgeons (as they were called) whom the Managers *ſelected* from the whole corporation of Surgeons, to do the principal part of the duty in this Hoſpital, when I was a ſtudent, that is, ſome thirty years ago. And if he had taken the trouble to *enquire*, he muſt have been informed, that in my younger days I was intimately acquainted, and lived on the moſt friendly terms with Mr Wood; and that I was even

a kind of pupil of his; at leaſt that I attended his ſhop for many months, in order to become acquainted with the common practice of Pharmacy. As to Mr John Bell's moſt valuable fact, that I never ſaw Mr Wood operate, I have only to ſay, that he was the firſt Surgeon I ever ſaw operate in private. I remember well, that it was on a poor woman who laboured under a ſtrangulated hernia; and that Dr Monro was preſent at the operation, and much ſurpriſed at meeting me there; for till that hour he did not know that I meant to follow Phyſic as a profeſſion. This I mention particularly, becauſe it reminds me ſtrongly, that almoſt from the time I began to ſtudy Phyſic, I made a practice of going to ſee operations when I had an opportunity; to ſay the truth, not as a matter of amuſement, or a thing that I liked, but as a proper piece of medical education.

I think it very *probable* too, but having no diſtinct remembrance of the fact, I cannot aſſert it poſitively, that Mr Wood was the firſt Surgeon that ever I ſaw operate in public in this Hoſpital. I am ſure at leaſt, that I have ſeen him operate in it very often, perhaps twenty or thirty times; but I kept no account of ſuch things, not dreaming of the poſſibility of its ever being wanted.

I ſcarce know what to think of Mr John Bell's curious expreſſion relating to the ſame gentleman, (Sect. 3. page 45. line 19.) "The "*coarſe* but ſkilful hands of a Sandie Wood." That his hands were ſkilful, I admit; but that they were *coarſe*, I never could perceive, nor ever heard, or read, till I had the pleaſure of peruſing Mr John Bell's ineſtimable pamphlet. Mr Wood always appeared to me, and I know was thought by others, not only a judicious and ſteady, but a very *neat* operator. I am ſure he was much neater than ſeveral others, and to the beſt of my remembrance, was the neateſt of all the Surgeons, who, from twenty-nine to thirty-

thirty-three years ago, were accuſtomed to operate in the Theatre of this Infirmary.

It is ſtill more difficult to conceive what Mr John Bell means by another curious compliment to the ſame Mr Wood, whom, in the ſame page, (line 25. and 26.), he calls " the protector and en-" courager of his younger brethren." Even with the help of his own very ample commentary on his text, (page 51.), there remain many things in it ſomewhat hard to be underſtood. While he mentions Mr Wood as the father of their College, as the oldeſt of their profeſſion in this city, and as the generous protector of every young Surgeon, he is pleaſed to tell us, that they (the younger Surgeons) *conſider him as the head of their party.*

That the oldeſt Surgeon in Edinburgh ſhould be the head of the party of the younger Surgeons, ſeems at firſt ſight almoſt as incongruous and ſtrange, as that the youngeſt ſhould be the head of the oldeſt. That a Manager of the Infirmary, as Mr Wood is and long has been, ſhould be the head of a party of the younger Surgeons, when theſe are engaged in a violent oppoſition to an unanimous reſolution of the Managers with reſpect to the choice and mode of attendance of the Surgeons of the Infirmary, is ſtill more marvellous; and to many people will appear incredible; eſpecially to thoſe who know, as Mr John Bell might have done, if he had taken the trouble to enquire, or even to look into the minutes of the corporation of Surgeons, that the ſentiments of Mr Wood in favour of ſelection from among the Surgeons, and againſt their indiſcriminate attendance in the Hoſpital by rotation, were long ſince publicly avowed and teſtified both by word and deed, and to this day ſtand on record. Full five and thirty years ago he accepted the appointment (by the Managers) of one of the four *ſubſtitute* Surgeons to the Infirmary. This he certainly would not have done, if he had not known that it was right, or if he had wiſhed to preſerve that pretended equality among the Surgeons of Edinburgh,

for

for which Deacon Kennedy and Co. had fought ſo manfully near thirty years before. But the ſpirit of Deacon Kennedy reſted on Mr Wood's brethren in 1766; who, taking grievous umbrage at ſuch a violation of their equal rights and merits, ſoon engaged in a violent conteſt about it with the Managers, which laſted ſeveral years, and at laſt worried them out of it. I have been informed by men whoſe authority I cannot diſtruſt, but not having acceſs to their minutes, I cannot aſſert from my own knowledge, that during that long and keen conteſt, Mr Alexander Wood was the principal champion who fought the battle for the Managers in the corporation of Surgeons, and that, being outvoted by his brethren, he formally proteſted againſt their proceedings, and that his proteſts ſtill remain on record.

I have heard that Mr Wood, as being a Manager of the Infirmary, from conſiderations of delicacy, *declined voting* as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, in *any of the queſtions* relating to the preſent conteſt between theſe two corporations. Perhaps he would have acted on the ſame principle, and with equal delicacy, by declining to vote on the ſame conteſt at any meeting of the Managers, if he had had an opportunity. But, to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, no ſuch opportunity occurred. I heard of no vote or diſſention among the Managers on the ſubject. They ſeemed to me to act unanimouſly and cordially in the buſineſs.

That kind of delicacy which induced Mr Wood to decline voting on this conteſt in the College of Surgeons, by ſome will be thought right, and by others wrong. As it does not concern either me or my argument, I ſhall offer no opinion about it, and make no remark on it but one, which will ſcarce admit of diſpute; that, be it right or wrong, it is no proof, and affords no preſumption or probability, that Mr Wood had changed his opinion, ſo long, ſo publicly, ſo ſtrenuouſly maintained, and actually manifeſted by his conduct. If Mr John Bell thinks otherwiſe,

and

and ſeriouſly wiſhes to prove that Mr Wood has changed his original opinion, and been the head of the party of the junior Surgeons in this their moſt brilliant conteſt with the Managers, it will be worth his while to give ſome proof of ſo marvellous a *fact*. If he can eſtabliſh his *fact*, he ſurely will not let ſlip ſo fine an opportunity of having a clean fair cut at me, by aſſerting, that the change in Mr Wood's ſentiments was all my doing, all the effect of my deteſtable Memorial; and that it illuſtrates completely, and proves, as far as one inſtance can prove ſo general a propoſition, what he has done me the honour to ſay of me, (Anſwer, page 8.), "That my talents are of a peculiar kind;—uſeleſs to my profeſſion, dangerous to ſcience, terrible to all but my enemies, and invariably fatal to every good cauſe which I have the cruelty to eſpouſe."

I beg it may be obſerved, however, that though I cannot help feeling, and even expreſſing ſome diſtruſt, as well as ſurpriſe, at Mr John Bell's declaration, that Mr Wood is the head of their party among the Surgeons on this occaſion, yet I by no means preſume to contradict it; which in truth I have no authority, or right, or intereſt to do. I leave it to thoſe whom it concerns to adjuſt it at their leiſure, or to let it alone, juſt as they think beſt. In the mean time, I truſt that Mr John Bell, with his uſual kindneſs to me, will allow me to ſuſpend my belief with reſpect to ſo ſtrange a fact, as Mr Alexander Wood being the head of the party of the junior Surgeons at preſent, till either he himſelf acknowledges it, or ſome evidence is produced of it, or at leaſt till I hear of it from ſome other quarter, which I have never yet done. Conſidering how lamentably and how uniformly unfortunate Mr John Bell has been in all his facts, juſt as poſitively aſſerted, with reſpect to me, it ſeems neither an irrational, nor improbable, nor uncandid conjecture, that he may have been almoſt as unfortunate with reſpect to that fact which relates to Mr Wood.

I am much more intereſted, and indeed ſtrongly called upon, to acknowledge my great obligations to Mr John Bell, for the extraordinary lenity and kindneſs to me manifeſted in the 4th page of his 3d ſection, where he has taken occaſion to ſuggeſt a few gentle hints about my extraordinary ignorance. " Conſcious of " the atrocity of his repreſentations, he acknowledges, and re- " peatedly avows his ignorance! A ſuperfluous document, God " knows! and to us a ſlender conſolation. His ignorance! after " what he has publiſhed againſt us, what could his confeſſions of " ignorance avail? We know his ignorance; we could have " *proved*, had he ventured to deny it, a degree of ignorance, " which, in the character he has thought fit to aſſume, is crimi- " nal."

He is perfectly right in ſparing himſelf the trouble of proving my *ignorance*; that is, as appears by the context, my ignorance of *Surgery*. He judged rightly, that any ſuch proof would be unneceſſary, his bare aſſertion being at leaſt of equal force with any proof that he could bring; juſt as an honeſt man's word is as good as his bond. I have no doubt that all his clients, all his friends, all who know him, nay, all who, without knowing him perſonally, have ſeen in his writings but ten or a dozen ſamples of his knowledge, and accuracy, and judgment, and caution, and candour, would truſt as much to his aſſertion, as to his moſt elaborate proofs of my ignorance of every thing, juſt as they would take his word as readily as his bond for L. 1000.

This plainly being the caſe, I can ſcarce find words to expreſs my gratitude to him, for that remnant of former kindneſs towards me, which hath made him confine his remarks on my ignorance, to my criminal ignorance of Surgery. I humbly hope he will have the goodneſs to continue the ſame moderation and delicacy, and not inſiſt on aſſerting (that is *proving*) my ſtill more criminal ignorance of Phyſic. The difference to him would be next to nothing;

thing; but to me it would be a very ſerious matter. It is poſſible, that notwithſtanding all his aſſertions (proofs) of my criminal ignorance of Surgery, I may yet continue to pick up a few miſerable guineas by the practice of Phyſic, ſo as to keep ſoul and body together a few years longer. But if he ſhould take it into his head to aſſert (prove) my more criminal ignorance of Phyſic, which I am ſure he could do as eaſily as he has aſſerted (proved) that I never ſaw Mr Wood operate, never ſaw an operation, know no Surgeons, never entered the Surgeons wards in this Hoſpital, &c. &c. I ſuſpect that I ſhould ſoon be forced to betake myſelf to a more ſpare regimen than would ſuit my conſtitution, or than I have ever yet ventured to preſcribe for any of my patients. I have ſome notion even that the too great facility of proving my ignorance of Phyſic, and the greater difficulty, if any thing could be difficult to his ſuperior genius, of *proving* my ignorance of Surgery, may have induced him to prefer the latter to the former topic. He has however taken care to ſhew what he could do, and even to ſtate the general principle on which all ſuch deciſive aſſertions (proofs) of my ignorance of Phyſic might be eſtabliſhed. "The Memorialiſt is ſo ignorant in our profeſſion, that he applies "to it the rules and canons of his own; he believes that Surgery, "like Medicine, is an uncertain and ſpeculative ſcience," &c. (Sect. 2d, page 48.). By this ſimple and comprehenſive canon, which he has ſo eaſily and happily proved, it follows plainly, that whenever I pronounced that a patient was far gone in a conſumption, Mr John Bell has only to aſſert, and he would *ipſo facto* prove, that the diſeaſe was a dropſy; if I called it a dropſy, he could prove that it was a violent fever; if I called it a violent fever, he could prove that it was only a very bad old pox; if I called it an old pox, he could prove that it was an apoplexy; if I preſcribed large bleeding and water-gruel, he could prove that the patient's only chance for life, was eating a pound of beef ſteaks to his din-

ner, and drinking a bottle of port after it; if I adviſed a patient to ride on horſeback and bathe in the ſea, Mr John Bell could prove that he ought to have been confined to his bed, with a large bliſter on his head, and muſtard cataplaſms at his feet. Not one of theſe *proofs* ſhould I ever think of diſputing; and not Mr John Bell only, but any body that pleaſed, might give ten thouſand ſuch proofs, as eaſily as he could ſay Jack Robinſon.

But to give ſuch proofs of my ignorance of Surgery is quite another matter: it is more *dignus vindice nodus*, and on this very account the more worthy of Mr John Bell's peculiar genius. To men of ordinary talents, it would appear almoſt as difficult as to *prove* my ignorance of the ſciences of magic and judicial aſtrology, or of the practical arts of playing on the fiddle or dancing on the tight rope; and pretty nearly for the ſame reaſons, namely, that I neither profeſs thoſe ſciences, nor ever attempted to practiſe thoſe arts.

Mr John Bell, I know, can eaſily ſpecify one memorable inſtance of a kind of diſpute in which I once happened to be engaged about a point in Surgery. But to the beſt of my remembrance and belief, that inſtance has been the only one of the kind in which I have been concerned, directly or indirectly, in the courſe of full ſix and twenty years that I have practiſed as a Phyſician in this city. And I am ſure that Mr John Bell, unrivalled as his talents are for proving whatever he pleaſes, will find ſome difficulty in proving, that *that* one was an inſtance of my criminal ignorance of Surgery. For, firſt, the opinion which I declared in that caſe, was formed on the plaineſt evidence of *two* of my own ſenſes; ſecondly, it was confirmed by the concurrent opinion of *two* experienced Surgeons, Mr Benjamin Bell and Mr Arrot; thirdly and laſtly, but not leaſt on this important occaſion, my opinion was confirmed, a few weeks after, by the individual Mr John Bell himſelf; who, by the moſt admirable manœuvre that ever I heard of, was called

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in by thoſe who differed from us, I firmly believe for no other reaſon, but the full confidence they had, that he would joyfully embrace ſuch an opportunity of deciding, right or wrong, againſt his dear friend and nameſake, and profeſſional brother, Mr Benjamin Bell. But Mr John Bell was too ſharp for them.

That the ſame perſon may practiſe both Phyſic and Surgery with great credit to himſelf and benefit to others, I ſhall never diſpute. But to do this, he muſt have been regularly bred to both branches of the profeſſion, and muſt underſtand them both thoroughly. This is undeniably the caſe with many practitioners in this iſland, whether called Surgeons or Phyſicians. It is one of the effects, and I think a very good effect, of the very flouriſhing ſtate of the Edinburgh Medical School for more than half a century paſt, of the cheapneſs of medical education here, and of the Profeſſors of Phyſic for the greater part of that time having all taught in Engliſh. Theſe circumſtances combined, have long put it in the power of thoſe who mean to practiſe firſt and chiefly as Surgeons, to acquire competent knowledge of Phyſic. Accordingly, we find, not only among the moſt eminent practitioners called Surgeons in this city, but among army and navy Surgeons, and often among Surgeons ſettled in very ſmall country towns, many men perfectly qualified to practiſe Phyſic as well as Surgery. In many ſituations, as in the army, the navy, and in ſmall country towns, it is abſolutely requiſite that the ſame perſon ſhould practiſe both branches of the medical profeſſion, or all three, including Pharmacy; juſt as in ſuch country towns, the ſame ſhopkeeper muſt be woollen and linen draper, tobacconiſt, cheeſemonger, hardware-man, and grocer. But in great towns, this is not neceſſary; and it has been thought, that ſome conſiderable advantages might reſult from the ſeveral branches of Medicine being practiſed ſeparately, by different perſons; juſt as in a great manufactory, one man is employed ſolely in making the

head,

head, and another in making the point of a pin. The ſame man, no doubt, might make both the head and the point; but probably he would not make them either ſo faſt or ſo well.

Conceiving that one branch of the medical profeſſion was enough for me, and that probably I might underſtand it the better for giving my attention to it alone, I have uniformly through life endeavoured to keep as ſtrictly as poſſible within the limits of my own province; and I never yet heard that any Surgeon or Apothecary complained of my interfering in his province. It would be abſurd to ſay that I *never* gave an opinion or advice in a caſe that properly belonged to the province of Surgery; for the merely telling a patient that his caſe required the aid of a Surgeon, and that as a Phyſician I could do him no eſſential ſervice, which I have done ſome thouſands of times, implies the having formed an opinion of ſuch a caſe. But I can ſay with perfect confidence, that I never attempted to practiſe Surgery; that I never yet gave an opinion in any chirurgical caſe in which I had not the evidence of at leaſt one of my own ſenſes to determine my judgment; that in all doubtful caſes, (either wholly or partly chirurgical), and in many that I did not think doubtful, but wiſhed the patients to have the beſt profeſſional opinions and aſſiſtance that could be got, I have inſiſted on their having the opinion of a profeſſed Surgeon; in ſome caſes, even a conſultation of more than one; that in all ſuch caſes, I ſhould truſt much more to the opinion of Surgeons than to my own, if we chanced to differ in opinion. But of ſuch difference of opinion, (between myſelf and profeſſed Surgeons in a chirurgical caſe), I have never known but that one inſtance already mentioned, in which, to my unſpeakable comfort and very great amuſement, Mr John Bell had the goodneſs to decide in my favour. I heartily wiſh I could be as ſure, or nearly ſo, of being as uniformly right in the opinions I have given, or may hereafter give, in caſes purely medical; in which, very generally,

nerally, the ſame direct evidence of our ſenſes cannot be obtained, and too often is but ill compenſated by all the aids which reaſoning and medical ſcience can afford.

As Mr John Bell is ſo much better acquainted with my criminal ignorance of Surgery than I am myſelf, and muſt be ſenſible how gratifying it would be to his clients, his friends, his profeſſional brethren, and mine too, and my pupils, and to the public at large, to ſee his proofs of that ignorance, I hope he will perceive that it would be a downright ſin to with-hold them. It will not be neceſſary to publiſh them all, as they would probably be too voluminous; but one handſome volume in quarto, price four guineas in boards, containing a ſmall ſample of them, will be a valuable piece of literary property, for which my good friend and bookſeller Mr Creech will be ready to treat with him on the moſt liberal terms; it being evident, conſidering both the author and the ſubject of it, that the book muſt ſell at leaſt as well as Dr Blair's Sermons or Dr Buchan's Family Phyſician.

Any perſon who has read my former Memorial, or who will now take the trouble to look into it, muſt perceive, that Mr John Bell has taken the hint, of which he has ſo well availed himſelf in his Philippic on my criminal ignorance of Surgery, and in his aſſertions (proofs) that I never ſaw an operation, &c. from what I have mentioned in it, page 116, line 8. and 9. (that "though I "was obliged, as a ſtudent, to learn the general principles of "Surgery, as other Phyſicians do, I *never liked* to ſee the practice "of it)." By a ſlight but very happy change in my text, perfectly allowable to Mr John Bell in his capacity of advocate and avenger of his much injured junior Brethren, he has contrived to read or underſtand that I *never ſaw* an operation. There is the more merit in this noble emendation of that paſſage of my Memorial, that in the very next ſentence I mention, that I never am preſent at an operation in private practice, unleſs at the patient's

tient's particular desire, and that of course I *see such operations very seldom.*

Most men would think, that this irresistibly implied that I saw such operations *sometimes*; which is the fact, as several of Mr John Bell's *senior* brethren, if he had taken the trouble to ask them, could have testified from their own certain knowledge. But this is not even left to be gathered by implication; for in different places of my Memorial, I have incidentally mentioned in positive terms, my having occasionally been present at chirurgical operations; for example, in page 185, where I mention, that, " I have " seen some Surgeons operate very well, whose sight was so much " impaired, that they were obliged to use spectacles." (To the best of my remembrance, John Hunter was one of these); in page 21, where I mention, that " I have repeatedly seen a Surgeon operate " in the Infirmary, whose hand shook so much, that every student " who saw him, thought he should scarce have undertaken to apply " a plaster or a bandage. Yet, with that grievous defect, I have " seen him attempt a nice operation on the eye:" and in the preceding page, (20.), where I mention, that " So long ago as when " I was a student, and as such accustomed to attend in the opera- " tion-room," (of this Infirmary), " it was not uncommon for " students to bestow very freely their marks of approbation or " disapprobation on different operators." I mentioned even being there, sitting among the offenders, though I was not one of them, when their behaviour in this respect was so bad, as to bring on them a very severe but well-merited rebuke from Mr Alexander Wood. Perhaps Mr John Bell meant to contradict, that is, with him, to *disprove*, all that I had said on that point; for surely my declaring candidly, that I did not like to see the practice of Surgery, could no more imply that I never saw an operation, &c. than my acknowledging that I never *liked* to learn the rules of Latin Syntax, or the Table of Multiplication, or the English Alphabet,

phabet, can imply or render credible that I never learned theſe things; or than my declaring, that I neither like the ſight nor the ſmell of a putrid mangled human body, can imply or make it credible, that I have not ſeen many a diſſection. But theſe I conceive it neceſſary for me as a Phyſician to ſee very often. Not ſo chirurgical operations, as I never mean to practiſe Surgery, or to conſtitute myſelf a critic in it, or a judge of the real and comparative merits of different operators.

It is no leſs admirable, and much more intereſting, to obſerve the uſe which Mr John Bell makes of my criminal ignorance of Surgery, and of my never having ſeen an operation, &c. which he has ſo happily eſtabliſhed. It may be eaſily underſtood from the whole drift and tenor of his Anſwer to me; for I do not think it is explicitly ſtated in any one paſſage in particular, though it is ſtrongly implied in ſome of thoſe already quoted, and indeed in numberleſs others.

The whole of his Philippic againſt me, and much of his argument, or *proofs*, (as he is pleaſed facetiouſly to call them, Sect. 3. page 47. line 14.), in behalf of his own clients, reſt on the *tacitly aſſumed* principle, that every thing which I have ſtated ſo ſtrongly, of the evils reſulting from the indiſcriminate attendance and multitudinous conſultations of all the Surgeons of Edinburgh in the Infirmary, depends on my own perſonal obſervation, and my own private unaſſiſted judgment.

That this, though perhaps not directly aſſerted, is implied in his admirable pleading, is manifeſt from this plain conſideration, that if all that I have ſaid of thoſe evils were eſtabliſhed by other evidence, my criminal ignorance of Surgery, and my never having ſeen an operation, would be of no more conſequence in the diſcuſſion, than my total ignorance of the language of New Zealand, and my never having ſeen any of the operations or practices of the Cannibals who inhabit that happy country.

How repugnant that irreſiſtible implication is to the whole tenor of my Memorial, every perſon who has read it muſt perceive at once. The fact is, that I went completely to the oppoſite extreme, and carefully and uniformly avoided ſtating any one conſideration, or urging any argument, that depended on my own judgment, or my own means of obſerving.

If Surgery had been my favourite or only ſtudy for thirty years, and if during all that time I had regularly attended the Surgeons wards and operation-room of this Infirmary, and had paid the ſtricteſt attention to all the operations and other practice that I ſaw in them, I ſhould have thought myſelf, and certainly ſhould have been thought by others, a moſt arrogant, uncandid, and irrational critic and pretended reformer; if on the faith of my own obſervations, and on the force of my own reaſonings, I had aſſerted facts, which others, who had good opportunities of obſerving, did not acknowledge, and complained of evils, which the moſt competent judges did not perceive. What cenſure then could have been too ſevere for me, if without any pretenſions to critical knowledge of Surgery, or any minute obſervation of particular facts, I had acted in the ſame arrogant, uncandid, irrational manner?

The whole tenor of my former Memorial muſt ſhew how carefully I have avoided that diſgraceful error; but one ſhort paragraph expreſſes my ſenſe of it ſo ſtrongly, that I ſhall quote it here.

" If my opinion on this ſubject" (the indiſcriminate attendance of the Surgeons by rotation) " were new, or ſingular, though " long formed, I ſhould not preſume at this time to obtrude it on " the Managers. But for more than twenty years it has been my " firm opinion, and during all that time I have frequently had " occaſion to hear the ſame opinion ſtrongly expreſſed by many " different perſons, Students, Profeſſors of Medicine, Phyſicians,

" Surgeons,

" Surgeons, nay, even Managers of the Royal Infirmary; per-
" ſons well informed, and frequently eye-witneſſes of the evils re-
" ſulting from that ſyſtem which they agreed with me in con-
" demning," Mem. page 19.

My argument reſted not on my own obſervations and opinions, but on the common ſenſe of mankind, as teſtified by their conduct in the choice that they make of Phyſicians and Surgeons, when themſelves or their families have need of our profeſſional ſervices; and if poſſible, ſtill more ſtrongly ſhewn by the correſponding conduct of Phyſicians and Surgeons in ſimilar circumſtances, who certainly would think it a moſt cruel hardſhip, if they were precluded from making a ſelection among their profeſſional brethren, and were obliged to accept, even gratuitouſly, their aſſiſtance on any poſſible plan of indiſcriminate rotation, and ſtill worſe, if they were obliged to truſt themſelves and their families to a numerous and promiſcuous conſultation of Phyſicians or Surgeons, when perhaps exaſperated to the utmoſt at one another, by the moſt malignant and inveterate perſonal, profeſſional, and corporation diſputes. My argument reſted on the uniform conduct of the Managers of all other Hoſpitals, in ſelecting from the great number of Phyſicians and Surgeons in large towns, a few of each profeſſion whom they think beſt qualified to do the hoſpital-duty: it reſted in ſome meaſure on the original conduct of the firſt Managers of this Infirmary, and even on the words of their charter; on their conduct with reſpect to the Phyſicians, and that of the Phyſicians towards them; on the ſelf-evident truth, that Surgeons as well as Phyſicians acquire much improvement by extenſive practice and long experience in their profeſſion; and on the neceſſary conſequence of this truth, that it muſt be very unfavourable to the patients in this Hoſpital, to be committed to the care of young and inexperienced Surgeons: it reſted very much on what I knew (by their own declarations both in public and in private) of the ſentiments and remarks

of many of the moſt eminent Surgeons that have ever practiſed in this Infirmary, ſeveral of whom had withdrawn from that duty avowedly on account of the badneſs of the ſyſtem of indiſcriminate attendance by rotation, which I reprobated; and ſome of whom had even declared, that they would in their own College have moved for putting an end to it, had they not been afraid of incurring the ſuſpicion of having ſome private intereſt of their own in view, ſuch as expecting to be made Surgeons to the Infirmary themſelves, to the excluſion of many of their profeſſional brethren. Nay, my argument reſted very much on the admiſſions, the aſſertions, and the reaſonings of the Surgeons themſelves, on the faith of which, the bargain with the Managers was made. Thoſe aſſertions and arguments I took as ſtated by Deacon Kennedy and his friends in the Memorial about the Surgeons Hoſpital in 1737; but I took the liberty to conſider them relatively to the patients as well as to the Surgeons; and pointed out ſtrongly, that relatively to the Surgeons and their ſuppoſed improvement by their indiſcriminate attendance in rotation, they are inconcluſive, and even feeble; and that, on the ſuppoſition of the number of Surgeons attending in that manner being conſiderable, the improvement of each of them individually muſt be next to nothing; but that relatively to the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, the ſame facts and arguments are concluſive proof of a great and cruel wrong.

All theſe things I humbly conceive I might have *ſeen* clearly, and underſtood perfectly, and pointed out plainly to the conviction of the Managers, though I had never ſeen an operation, nay, though I had been ſtone blind from my birth, unleſs I had alſo been deaf, or an idiot; and though I had been ſo ignorant of Surgery, as not to know a trepan from an amputation knife, or a broken leg from a cancerous breaſt. It is much to be lamented, that Mr John Bell and his clients did not extend their remarks on ignorance of Surgery, and of all that paſſed in the Surgeons wards, and in the

operation-room

operation-room of this Infirmary, to the *minority* of their own profeſſional brethren, I mean the fourteen out of twenty-nine, at a very memorable meeting of their College; which fourteen, comprehending many of the moſt eminent Surgeons that at preſent are, or ever were, in Edinburgh, and who have done the longeſt and beſt duty in this Infirmary, declared, in the moſt explicit terms, that the indiſcriminate attendance of the Surgeons in rotation was *irreconcileable with the good of the Infirmary.*

A ſtronger teſtimonial in favour of my argument can ſcarce be wiſhed, nay, hardly conceived; but there is one other, nearly the ſame in ſubſtance, which has the advantage of being *unanimous*, given at a very full meeting of the Royal College of Surgeons, given, as it were incidentally, in the courſe of a calm and deliberate conſideration of another ſubject; given, not as an imperfect, reluctant, extorted teſtimony about a thing doubtful, or obſcurely known, or capable of being diſputed, but as a frank avowal of a thing notorious and acknowledged; given long before my Memorial was ever thought of, at a period nearly equally diſtant from the end of the laſt great conteſt and the beginning of the preſent conteſt with the Managers, about the mode of attendance of the Surgeons in the Infirmary, and ſeemingly not connected with, or vitiated or modified by, any of their own perſonal, profeſſional, or corporation diſputes.

Not having acceſs to their records, I cannot preſume to give the following account of what paſſed in their College about eighteen years ago, as an exact tranſcript from their own minute-book; but I have it from ſuch authority, that I can have no doubt of its being in ſum and ſubſtance perfectly true. If any of them ſuſpect that there is any error in it, he may ſatisfy himſelf by conſulting their minutes; by them I ſhall abide.

Surgeons

Surgeons Hall, Edinburgh, 9th Auguſt 1784.

Mr * * repreſented, That it was conſidered by many of the members as a very great hardſhip, that the Surgeons attending upon the Royal Infirmary ſhould not have the power of admitting and diſmiſſing the patients in the chirurgical department, but that it ſhould be veſted in the Phyſicians of the Hoſpital, who have no concern in the cure of theſe patients; and he moved, that a petition be preſented to the Managers for an alteration of a rule ſo injurious to the attendant Surgeons. Mr *. propoſed, that it ſhould be referred to the conſideration of a committee compoſed of Meſſ. * * * * and *.

The committee reported, That they had fully conſidered the propoſal, and were clearly of opinion, that ſuch an alteration would be highly proper and agreeable; but at the ſame time, after peruſing the Managers laſt minute on that ſubject, find their refuſal expreſſed in the ſtrongeſt and moſt pointed terms. The committee, therefore, humbly ſuggeſted, that previous to making ſuch application, the Royal College ſhould endeavour to collect the ſentiments of the Managers, and by that means be able to diſcover what probability there is of their petition being attended to.

They are likewiſe of opinion, that it would be imprudent to run the riſk of irritating the Managers by repeated applications of this nature, and thereby afford them an apology for adopting meaſures WHICH, HOWEVER ADVANTAGEOUS THEY MIGHT BE TO THE HOSPITAL, WOULD BE ATTENDED WITH ESSENTIAL PREJUDICE TO THE INTEREST OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE. The above report being conſidered by the meeting, *was unanimouſly approved of.*

Such, I have good reaſon to believe, were the words of the report of a reſpectable committee, and ſuch the unanimous opinion of a very full meeting of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1784. I underſtand that ſix and twenty Fellows of the College were preſent

at

at that meeting, and approved of that report. I have ſuppreſſed here the names of the gentlemen preſent, and even of thoſe (five in number) who formed the committee; for the names of individuals are not eſſential to my argument; and it happens, ſomewhat unfortunately, that while *three* of the *five* who ſo honeſtly avowed that what was *advantageous to the Hoſpital*, was to be prevented becauſe it would be *prejudicial to the intereſt of the Royal College*, have on the preſent occaſion moſt honourably preferred the good of the Hoſpital (that is of the ſick poor) to the intereſt, real or ſuppoſed, of their own College; the other *two* have done juſt the contrary. Whether the conduct of theſe two, (of the committee), and of ſome others of the College who concurred in unanimouſly approving of that report, and yet have keenly oppoſed the Managers on the preſent occaſion, proceeds entirely from their love of conſiſtency, or from pure zeal for the intereſt of their own Royal College, or from the perverſe operation of my unlucky Memorial on ſome irritable conſtitutions, it is very difficult, or perhaps impoſſible to aſcertain. But there is no difficulty whatever in aſcertaining that their conduct does not proceed from pure zeal, or any zeal at all, for the welfare of the ſick poor in the Hoſpital.

The unlooked-for acquiſition of that moſt precious and characteriſtic document, of the ſentiments of the Surgeons themſelves, with reſpect to the oppoſition between the *advantage* of the Hoſpital, and the *intereſt* of their Royal College, enables me to explain, (I truſt ſufficiently), to what facts and circumſtances I alluded in the following paſſage of my former Memorial, (page 259, 260.)

" It is poſſible, however, that ſome particular facts or circum-
" ſtances, unknown to me, or heard of only as vague reports, to
" which I could pay no regard, may be well known to the Sur-
" geons, and may by them be thought of ſuch importance in
" behalf of the preſent ſyſtem, that I ought to have ſtated them,
" and given them their full weight in this paper. I am ſenſible

" that

" that any wilful ſuppreſſion of ſuch facts or circumſtances on " my part, would be juſt as bad as the fabrication of falſehoods " to ſerve my purpoſe.

" Therefore, to preclude at once all ſuch ſurmiſes, I hereby " publicly make them this offer, which they muſt all acknow- " ledge to be fair.

" If any *facts* or *circumſtances* known to them have been omit- " ted in this Memorial, which they think ſhould have been *ſtated* " in it, as involving the honour and intereſt, either of their Col- " lege in general or of any individual member of it, and which, " on mature deliberation, they wiſh to have as publicly known " as this paper will be, let them give me *authentic information* of " thoſe things, and I engage, without delay, to print them in " their own words, in an Additional Memorial, which ſhall be " diſtributed in the ſame manner as this; and either to admit " them to be valid, or to give my reaſons for diſregarding " them.

" They will not, I preſume, underſtand by this offer, that I un- " dertake or wiſh to argue their caſe for them. I have the humi- " lity to believe, that they would rather truſt it to a conſultation of " the five and twenty youngeſt Lawyers at the bar, or to all of " them in rotation; rather to Jonathan Dawplucker himſelf; per- " haps rather to the Devil, than to me. But I wiſh them fully to " know, that there is no wilful ſuppreſſion, on my part, of any " fact or circumſtance favourable to them, and unfavourable to " my cauſe; and that I ſhould conſider any ſuch diſingenuous " conduct, as both diſgraceful to myſelf, and inconſiſtent with the " honeſt and benevolent purpoſe of this Memorial."

At firſt ſight, one ſhould think it no eaſy matter either to miſun- derſtand that very candid and liberal offer which I made, or to miſtake the reaſon and purpoſe of it, or to take offence at it. But Mr John Bell has had the good fortune to do all theſe things, ſeemingly

ſeemingly with the utmoſt eaſe and even pleaſure: ſuch is the force of ſuperior genius.

By the ſimple expedient of ſuppreſſing the firſt two paragraphs, and alſo the laſt paragraph, of that paſſage, and alſo mutilating *a little* the third paragraph, which he gives in the following words, " But if there be any facts or circumſtances, which, on mature " deliberation, they wiſh to have as publicly known as this paper " will be, *let them give me authentic information*," he has contrived to make it a ſubject of great wrath, and moſt ſevere reprehenſion. I ſcarce think he could have expreſſed his indignation in more violent terms, if I had inſiſted on adminiſtering a large doſe of ratſbane to him, and to each of his profeſſional Brethren. His words are theſe:

" We know not how this gentleman came to think of addreſſing " language of this kind to men as capable as himſelf of repreſenting " to the Public the principles of their profeſſion, as capable of jud- " ging impartially and honeſtly for the intereſts of a public Cha- " rity! Nor can we imagine where, among the diplomatic re- " cords, in Imperial Ukaſe, or in Turkiſh Firman, the author " found precedent for this auguſt ſtyle! but well we know, that " nothing has been promulgated by Paul Emperor of all the Ruſ- " ſias, in his preſent perturbed ſtate of mind, more ſupreme than " this declaration," &c. *Sect. I. page* 49.

All this furious reprimand and abuſe, only for offering to print and publiſh any thing which the Surgeons themſelves might think I ought to have publiſhed in my original Memorial, as favourable to their cauſe; and the *not* publiſhing of which might have been regarded as wilful and diſingenuous ſuppreſſion of the truth. My offer went no farther; and was only a reaſonable and fair precaution on my part to prevent an unjuſt and foul ſuſpicion, to which otherwiſe I ſhould have been expoſed. For, admitting that the Surgeons were as capable as myſelf, or infinitely

more capable, of repreſenting to the Public whatever they pleaſed; admitting even that they were as capable of judging *impartially and honeſtly for the intereſts of a public Charity*, which it now appears *indiſputably* that ſo lately as 1784 they were *unanimouſly reſolved not to do*; and ſuppoſing further, that they had actually publiſhed, in an anſwer to my Memorial, all thoſe facts and circumſtances to which I alluded; ſtill any ſuch publication of theirs, far from being a vindication of me, would have been a ſtrong article of evidence againſt me. Suppoſing what I had heard to be true, I was bound in candour and fair dealing to ſtate it publicly in my Memorial: but ſuppoſing it falſe, I ſhould certainly have incurred the reproach of wilfully fabricating ſuch a falſehood; for I had heard it only as a vague report, and was not even at liberty, having given my promiſe to that effect, to mention the perſons from whom I heard it, and who themſelves could not vouch for the truth of it. Then, the circumſtances, to which I alluded, were, like thoſe in Deacon Kennedy's Memorial, of ſo ambiguous a nature, that in one point of view they were ſtrongly in favour of the claim of the Surgeons; but in another point of view they were, in my opinion, deciſively againſt them: But I could not avail myſelf of them for my purpoſe, till they were either authenticated to me by ſome individual from his own certain knowledge, or were openly avowed by the Surgeons themſelves collectively.

The paſſage quoted (page 143,-4.) from my former Memorial, of which it is the end, was intended not only to prevent unfavourable ſuſpicions of my wilfully ſuppreſſing thoſe circumſtances, but to procure ſome authentic information, or if poſſible an avowal of them by the Surgeons collectively, if on mature deliberation they ſhould chooſe to diſpute the point with the Managers. An attentive reader will perceive at once that the whole of that paſſage, comprehending four paragraphs, as already quoted, is ſupplemental. It was written after my Memorial was (as I thought) finiſhed,

ed, and even in print; in conſequence of my being told that I might perhaps meet with more difficulty and oppoſition from ſome of the Surgeons than I was aware of, and this on principles ſomewhat different from thoſe which I had ſtated. It was ſuggeſted to me, by two or three different perſons, who knew of my Memorial, that ſome of the Surgeons conſidered their equal right of attending and operating in the Infirmary by rotation, not merely as an honourable privilege long ſince acquired, but as a matter of great intereſt, and in one reſpect even of *pecuniary* intereſt, to their College in its corporate capacity.

I was told, that the great advantages of that privilege, as a piece of *education* in Surgery which could be got *no where elſe*, had been ſometimes ſtrongly urged as an argument to induce ſome young men of the profeſſion to become members of the Royal College of Surgeons; which implies, in many caſes, paying a good round ſum of money to the College. I am convinced there was no miſtake in that information; for though I am not at liberty to mention his name, I can ſtate, that ſoon after my former Memorial was diſtributed, I was informed by a gentleman of the profeſſion, that *that* argument had been ſtrongly urged to induce him to *enter* with the College of Surgeons; which however he has not done.

I was told that ſome individuals knowing of that privilege, and thinking it a good piece of education in their profeſſion, had actually on that account paid their money to become Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, though they did not mean afterwards to reſide or practiſe in this City or in its neighbourhood. It might be injurious as well as indelicate to individuals, who may afterwards change their mind and ſettle here, to mention names: but I preſume the fact in general will not be diſputed. How far that branch of the revenue of the Royal College of Surgeons may be increaſed, how much the proſperity of their Widows Fund, (a noble inſtitution, which does their Society, and

particularly Mr Hay, very great honour) may be promoted, by that application of their privilege of attending indiſcriminately in the Infirmary, it is difficult or impoſſible to determine. But it is unneceſſary to dwell on ſuch points, which are more than tacitly given up, by Mr John Bell and his clients, in ſhifting the very dangerous and untenable ground that Deacon Kennedy and his friends had choſen, and declaring, to the aſtoniſhment as well as edification of the ignorant and malevolent vulgar, that young Surgeons were not, like young Phyſicians, capable of being improved by experience, and notoriouſly ſtanding much in need of it, as Deacon Kennedy and Co. had ignorantly and wickedly aſſerted; but on the contrary, in full perfection from the moment that they become Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, and conſequently incapable of growing better. But admitting, in compliment to Mr John Bell, and his Junior Brethren and Clients, that the youngeſt Surgeons who have become Fellows of their Royal College can never grow better, it is at leaſt abundantly evident that they muſt all be very capable of growing worſe, as they grow older; their eyes growing dim, their hands unſteady, themſelves lazy, negligent, and forgetful of what they had learned when young; and probably ſome of them growing drunken, inſolent, and brutal; for to theſe ſad infirmities the individuals of our moſt noble Faculty, juſt like men of all other profeſſions and of no profeſſion, are unfortunately ſubject.

If therefore Mr John Bell's noble diſcovery be admitted, namely, that the youngeſt Surgeons are in full perfection, neither needing, nor capable of receiving, any improvement by experience, ſtill it would follow, as a neceſſary conſequence, that a ſelection ought to be made among all the Surgeons Fellows of the Royal College, juſt to give the charge of the patients in the Hoſpital to the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced of them; all of whom, on the principle aſſumed, muſt have attained the utmoſt poſſible

or conceivable improvement, and none of whom (merely for want of time) can have fallen off from that high ſtate of perfection.

I ſcarce think that either Mr John Bell or his clients will venture to maintain, but if they ſhould try it, I am ſure they will get no body to believe, that either by an expreſs clauſe, or by ſome ſecret charm in the charter of their Royal College, the Fellows of it are exempted from the common infirmities of human nature; and in particular, preſerved from growing old, and ſtupid, and lazy, and half blind, and careleſs, brutal, and drunken.

To ſuch little peculiarities and misfortunes as theſe I alluded in my former Memorial; as I think, in the moſt delicate, and certainly in the moſt general terms; but in ſuch a manner as could not fail to be underſtood by all intereſted in the ſubject, and qualified to judge of it. Theſe were my words: "Common ſenſe, "and juſtice, and humanity, all require, that for ſo difficult and "important a truſt, ſome ſelection ſhould be made; and that ſome "regard ſhould be paid to the experience, and to the *perſonal* and "*profeſſional character*, as well as to the education and ſtation of "the perſons in whom that truſt is repoſed." *Mem.* p. 30.

I thought it unneceſſary and indelicate to be more particular on ſuch a ſubject. But now that Mr John Bell and his clients have made it neceſſary, and have obligingly removed all ſcruples in point of delicacy, I ſhall explain myſelf more fully.

Whatever may be the character and habits of the individual Members of the Royal College of Surgeons at preſent, of many of whom I have ſcarce any knowledge, and of none of whom I muſt be underſtood here to expreſs any opinion, I am ſure, that even within my memory, ſeveral Fellows of that Royal College were very honeſt fellows; men duly attentive to moiſten their clay. This is certainly one of the moſt important duties which a rational being owes to himſelf, and accordingly has been approved and practiſed by many

many of the moſt orthodox Divines of all Chriſtian Churches, as well as by the greateſt Heathen Philoſophers: for Zeno, Plato, Ariſtotle, all were lovers of a bottle. It would therefore be little leſs than hereſy, and certainly would be uſeleſs, as well as abſurd, to object to it. But it muſt be owned, and it is much to be lamented, that the very frequent and zealous diſcharge of that ſacred duty which a man owes to himſelf, ſometimes interferes a little with the performance of thoſe ſecondary duties that he owes to others; for example, thoſe little offices which every man of the medical profeſſion owes to his patients. Accordingly, I have now and then ſeen ſome of thoſe very honeſt Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons viſiting their patients, when they had moiſtened their clay ſo effectually, that they could neither ſpeak articulately, nor walk or ſtand without ſtaggering, and when they muſt have been equally unfit to judge what ought to be done, or to perform any chirurgical operation that might have been needed.

The hour of the ordinary viſit of the Surgeons in the Infirmary, broad noon, muſt in general have preſerved their patients in it from ſuffering much in that way. But within my memory, ſome of the Surgeons *now dead*, who attended in it by rotation, were notorious ſots and drunkards; and as in caſes of accidents, or ſudden and urgent danger of patients previouſly in the Hoſpital, the attending Surgeon muſt come and officiate at any hour of the day, ſome unfortunate patients have had a little experience of ſuch Surgeons. If, in the courſe of judicial proceedings, it had become neceſſary to eſtabliſh by evidence ſome particular inſtances of that kind, I could have proved, by the moſt unexceptionable teſtimony of two eminent Surgeons, both of whom have had the honour to preſide over the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, both of whom were eye-witneſſes of the fact, and one of whom even was the aſſiſtant in the operation, that the attendant Surgeon operated in an urgent caſe when he was ſo drunk, that he did not know

the

the back of his knife from the edge, and actually attempted to cut with the back of it.

Another of thoſe very honeſt fellows gave me once, in private practice, a good ſpecimen of his talents and character: and as ſuch an inſtance explains better than any general remarks can do what I here wiſh to point out, I ſhall ſtate briefly the fact.

Near twenty years ago, I was called at midnight to ſee a gentleman, who, I was told was very ill. I found him extremely ill indeed, with high fever, and ſtrong marks of violent internal inflammation. From ſome very peculiar ſymptoms which I obſerved in him, I ſuſpected that the inflammation was ſeated in his liver: but as this diſeaſe, at leaſt in its violent form, is uncommon in this country, I could not help diſtruſting my own judgment, and was led of courſe to examine him very minutely, and to put many queſtions to him, by his anſwers to which, I ſoon diſcovered that he was in the ſecret, and one of us: for we find one another out as eaſily as free maſons do. I then told him plainly what I ſuſpected his diſorder was, and what were my reaſons for doubting about it. He immediately put an end to my doubts, by telling me, that he was convinced I was right; for that two years before, when at Canton in China, where he had been as Surgeon to an Eaſt-India ſhip, he had had a ſevere imflammation of his liver, which had been cured by the uſual remedies. He had previouſly told me, that a few days before, when coming down by ſea from London to Edinburgh, he had been ſhipwrecked on the coaſt of Lincolnſhire, and on that occaſion had been, for ſeveral hours, much expoſed to cold and wet. Having thus come to a right underſtanding with my patient, I left him under ſentence of a large bleeding without delay, and ſome other remedies of leſs conſequence. Before ſix in the morning I was called again to him with another ſtill more urgent meſſage, importing that he was much worſe, and ſeemed to be dying. I found him really much worſe,

worſe, and in a very alarming ſituation; the cauſe of which was ſoon explained to me. When he, in conſequence of my advice at my former viſit, deſired that a Surgeon might be ſent for to bleed him immediately, the waiter (for my patient chanced to be lodged either in a tavern, or in lodgings adjoining to and connected with one) told him he had no occaſion to go far for a Surgeon, as there was one juſt at hand. This happened to be a worthy member of the Royal College, well known as an honeſt Fellow, but withal a very thirſty ſoul, who at that time was in the very act of moiſtening his clay in that tavern. As ſoon as he ſaw his patient, and learned that he wiſhed to be bled without delay, " Bleed you, Sir," (ſaid the jovial knight of the illuſtrious order of the ſcalpel), " you " have no occaſion to be bled; a bottle of wine will do you much " more good." The patient was too eaſily prevailed on to try, not indeed the whole bottle, which probably would have done his buſineſs effectually, but ſome glaſſes of wine; the effect of which was more than enough to convince him of his error and his danger, and to make him ſend on a violent hurry for me again, and at the ſame time for another Surgeon, of a very different character from the former, and not the leaſt of an honeſt fellow. This other Surgeon, by name Mr James Ruſſell, I found waiting in the patient's antichamber; for he had got the ſtart of me, and had examined the patient before I arrived. I immediately aſked him whether *he* had any ſcruples about bleeding the patient? " None at all," anſwered he, with great gravity, and peculiar dryneſs; " if you preſcribe " it, I ſhall do it." That, I told him, was all very well; but begged he would ſay frankly whether he had any doubts as to the propriety of it. He then told me very frankly, that it was plain the man had no other chance for his life. So to work he went immediately, and bled him largely, and repeated the ſame operation a few hours after, by which the patient was ſoon and eaſily cured.

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It was impoſſible to ſee ſuch a ſtriking example of the evils and dangers to which patients may be expoſed by the perſonal characters and habits of their medical adviſers and operators, without ſome painful reflections on the hard lot of thoſe poor patients, who, either in their own houſes, or in the Hoſpital, were entruſted to the care and ſkill of ſuch a practitioner: for that honeſt Fellow of the Royal College attended and operated in his turn in the Royal Infirmary. If, even on that ſlight occaſion, inſtead of playing the Doctor, and deciding on the expediency, or rather inexpediency, of the bleeding which I had preſcribed, he had endeavoured to perform it, as was his profeſſional duty, it might have been ſtill worſe for the patient: it might have ended in cutting an artery, and in the loſs of his arm or of his life. Or if the practitioner had been called to a patient with a fractured ſkull, or a ſtrangulated hernia, very poſſibly the ſame favourite remedy, the bottle of wine, would have been his firſt preſcription. But if he had thought of the difficult and dangerous operations required in thoſe caſes reſpectively, and had endeavoured to perform them, the reſult probably would have been equally fatal to the patients. Certain wiſe men have held, that ſome Phyſicians preſcribe, but I believe it has never yet been diſcovered that any Surgeons operate, as well when drunk as when ſober.

As I had no right and no power, at that time, to interfere in the management of the Royal Infirmary, and did not even know that it was poſſible to get rid of that cruel evil in the chirurgical department of it; and as I did not wiſh to break a bruiſed reed, for the honeſt fellow to whom I allude was ſcarce more fortunate in point of general eſtimation and profeſſional employment, than he had been in that one caſe; I took no further notice of the adventure at that time. But long after, indeed after his death, I learned, with much edification, that his character and habits were well known, by deciſive experience, in the Infirmary. He was par-

ticularly diſtinguiſhed from all the other honeſt Fellows of his college by his extraordinary care of the Surgeons inſtruments. He even inſiſted on having, while he attended in rotation, a ſeparate key to the preſs in which they are kept under the immediate care of the Surgeons Clerk or Houſe-ſurgeon; and by the help of that key uſed to pay frequent private viſits to them. The reaſon of this extraordinary attention was not known for ſome time; but at laſt the Matron diſcovered that he had a patient in that preſs, in the laſt ſtage of a conſumption, to whom his viſits were paid: namely, the Brandy bottle.

Though none of his brethren, at leaſt that ever I heard of, were ſuppoſed to viſit that Brandy bottle privately, yet ſeveral of them occaſionally did ſo in public, at broad noon, without the ſmalleſt reſerve or delicacy; as I can teſtify from my moſt certain knowledge: for many a time have I ſeen ſeveral of them prime with a good dram of brandy, juſt before they went to the theatre, to the final conſultation, and operation, on ſome unhappy patient. But I muſt do them the juſtice to ſay, that they drank their brandy moſt ſcientifically, out of a cupping-glaſs. I can even remember diſtinctly, though after an interval of four or five and twenty years, that one day a good deal of exquiſite chirurgical wit paſſed on the ſubject of what might probably have been the laſt application of the ſaid cupping-glaſs: occaſioned, as I underſtood, by one of their number being a little ſqueamiſh on that point; which the reſt of them ſeemed to think of no conſequence. I muſt alſo do them the juſtice to teſtify, that I never ſaw nor ſuſpected that any of them took ſuch an overcharge of the brandy as ſome naval and military heroes are ſaid to have done juſt before going to battle; or, as that valiant Knight, Moore of Moore-Hall, did; of whom we read, in the Authentic Ballad which records his perilous adventure with the Dragon of Wantley, that before he went forth to fight that horrid monſter, " to make him ſtrong

" and

" and mighty, he drank by the tale ſix pots of ale and a quart " of aqua vitæ;" which judicious preparation ſucceeded ſo well with him, that he ſlew the Dragon by a ſingle kick on the breech. It was never even ſuſpected that any one of thoſe brandy-drinking gentlemen had the ſmalleſt diſtruſt of his own proweſs. But I think it poſſible that ſome of the more claſſical of them had in mind Horace's very juſt compliments to his favourite Wine Caſk:

Tu lene tormentum ingenio admoves
Plerumque duro: tu ſapientium
Curas, et arcanum jocoſo
Conſilium retegis Lyæo:
Tu ſpem reducis mentibus anxiis,
Vireiſque, et addis cornua pauperi.
* * * * *
Narratur et priſci Catonis
Sæpe mero caluiſſe Virtus.

But more probably their chief or only purpoſe was to ſettle their nerves, and make their hands ſteady; which was certainly very laudable, and in ſome of them, I believe, very neceſſary. It is but fair to preſume that they acted on ſound medical principles; and in ſtrict obedience to the well known precept in the Medicina Salernitana, (a moſt precious work compiled about 700 years ago, for the benefit of Robert Duke of Normandy, the ſon of William the Conqueror).

Si nocturna tibi noceat potatio vini,
Hoc tu mane bibas iterum, et fuerit medicina.

Which precept, I firmly believe, has been more generally adopted and practiſed than any aphoriſm of Hippocrates. I ſcarce think they could have committed ſo abſurd a blunder as to apply to ſtrong waters what Ovid has ſaid of the vile ſpring waters of a certain place in Arcadia,

Ambiguis ſuſpectus aquis: quas nocte timeto:
Nocte nocent potæ: ſine noxa luce bibuntur.

But it is of no moment what was the cauſe of thoſe cupping-glaſſes of brandy: There can be no doubt what the effect of them ſoon would be.

I am ſure all the ſenior Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, who ſhall *chooſe* to remember the tranſactions of their own Society, between ſixteen and ſeven and twenty years ago, muſt know, from the occurrences that I have ſtated, the names of thoſe honeſt Fellows to whoſe conduct the preceding obſervations relate: and I have little or no doubt that moſt or all of them can eaſily give the names of two others of their Brethren, whoſe conduct ſhowed how very near a Fellow of their College may approach to the ſavage or the brute, without the help of either wine or brandy.

One of theſe worthies was diſtinguiſhed by the moſt arrogant conceit of his own ſuperior talents, and knowledge, and profeſſional ſkill; and by his moſt ſovereign contempt for moſt or all of his profeſſional brethren and their accompliſhments. Theſe ſentiments I have heard him expreſs without reſerve: as I preſume almoſt every perſon did, who had the happineſs of his acquaintance. But the diſplay which he gave of his character and ſentiments, by his conduct in the Hoſpital, was far beyond the reach of the moſt lively imagination to have ſuppoſed, in drawing a fictitious character of the ſame kind. The firſt act of his adminiſtration was to change at once all the dreſſings that his predeceſſor had ordered for the patients in the Surgeons wards. Nothing could ſhew more ſtrongly what he thought of his predeceſſor and of himſelf. I have been told that he acted in that manner repeatedly: I ſuppoſe, whenever he attended in rotation. A very eminent Phyſician ſtill living, Dr Currie of Liverpool, was an eye-witneſs of one of thoſe exhibitions; and in his letter to Mr Benjamin Bell, (anſwers to Mr B. B.'s queries), an extract of which has already been printed and diſtributed in the courſe of this diſcuſſion, (*Appendix to Mr B.'s Obſervations*, page 6. and 7.), ſpeaks of it in terms of the utmoſt indignation and horror.

horror. His words are theſe: " I cannot calmly think of what " I have often ſeen of your ſyſtem of attendance. How many poor " patients have been injured by it! Twenty-two years ago, when " I was attending your Hoſpital, the day on which the attending " Surgeon went off at the end of his two months, " now in his grave, ordered the whole of the dreſſings of every " patient to be changed in an inſtant, with every mark of con- " tempt. The impreſſion ſunk ſo deep, that I ſhall never loſe it.

" If, indeed, there were no other motives for ſelection in the " attendants on Hoſpitals, the moral qualities requiſite in Medi- " cal Practitioners would be ſufficient. What miſchief may not " be done by a wild Theoriſt, acting under the influence of vani- " ty and ſelf-conceit, in concert, as they generally are, with a ca- " pricious temper and unfeeling heart; where his conduct is un- " controuled, where life is at ſtake, and poverty and ſickneſs the " unreſiſting objects: yet people of this kind muſt be admitted " into Colleges and Corporations; as appears clearly to have been " the caſe in the inſtance to which I refer."

Indeed the words ſuppreſſed by Mr Bell, from conſiderations of delicacy, in printing that extract of Dr Currie's letter, were, if poſſible, more characteriſtic of Dr C.'s ſentiments than all that he has printed of it. It was not the perſon's name that in Dr C.'s original letter ſtood where Mr B. in printing it, has put the blank; but a ſhort and pithy deſcription of him in theſe words: " A ſavage, " now in his grave," &c. To convey to thoſe unacquainted with ſuch matters a juſt notion of the atrocity of his procedure, in changing at once all the dreſſings directed by his predeceſſor, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that *probably* all the patients in the Surgeons Wards had been treated tenderly and ſkilfully by the Surgeon whoſe attendance in rotation had juſt ceaſed. According to Mr John Bell's doctrine, approved and ſanctioned by his friends and clients, that every Fellow of their Royal College is perfectly qualified

qualified to do the Hoſpital duty, all the patients, before that change of all the dreſſings was made, *muſt* have been as well treated as poſſible. If ſo, there is much difficulty in conceiving that they were equally well treated, when and after that complete change was made. And if nine out of ten, or nineteen out of twenty of them, were doing well under their former treatment, which is highly probable; to give up the certainty of relief or cure which they enjoyed, for an uncertainty, was to expoſe them needleſsly to lengthened ſufferings and increaſed danger: eſpecially if the new dreſſings ordered were ſuch as no other Surgeon approved of, or, after ſeeing repeatedly their bad or no effects, would have employed. This, from what I have heard in converſation with ſome other Surgeons, the cotemporaries of that Savage, and from what I remember was one of his favourite dreſſings, I ſtrongly ſuſpect was the caſe.

Painful, diſguſting, and ſhocking as this ſubject is, I muſt not quit it, without mentioning one little ſpecimen more of the intellectual and moral endowments of another Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, who, in his turn, uſed to attend in the Hoſpital. This gentleman, though nowiſe deficient in the eſſential accompliſhments of a good opinion of himſelf, and due contempt for many of his brethren, was chiefly diſtinguiſhed, as far as I know, (and I knew him well ſome twenty or five and twenty years ago), by very high notions of his perſonal and profeſſional dignity. This ſentiment, as Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me fully teſtifies, is ſtill cheriſhed by many worthy Members of the Royal College of Surgeons; but it prevailed equally among many of them before he or his Anſwer were ever heard of. It happened, many years ago, but ſtill within my memory, that the Managers found it neceſſary to limit the uſe of wine (Port) in the Hoſpital, which ſome of the practitioners, both Phyſicians and Surgeons, were thought to preſcribe for their patients unneceſſarily, and too freely. It was ſaid, whether with ſtrict truth, or only as a good illuſtration of the nature

nature and greatneſs of the evil, I never took the trouble to aſcertain, that about that time the annual expence of the Hoſpital for Port wine was more than that for all other medicines put together. It certainly had become diſproportionately great. All of us, I believe, got a general admonition on this ſubject from the Managers; and I know that I, at that time one of the two Clinical Profeſſors, got a very ſtrong private admonition about it from Dr Cullen. Very lately, long after my former Memorial was diſtributed, I chanced to hear one of the Senior Surgeons mention particularly, what I had ſome imperfect remembrance of having heard long before, that ſome of the Surgeons, who were ſaid to be greater offenders in the waſte of wine than any of the Phyſicians were, had paid ſo little regard to the general admonition, that the Managers were obliged, not only to repeat it, but to enforce it with another regulation, that no Port wine ſhould be given to patients without permiſſion from a Manager, which the Surgeon was to apply for in caſe of real neceſſity; and which, it may be preſumed, would never be refuſed in ſuch a caſe, any more than the permiſſion of two Managers to open the body of a patient who has died in the Infirmary. Every perſon who has practiſed in it knows, that this, which may do good to thouſands, and can do harm to none, is not allowed to be done without the conſent of the relations or friends of the deceaſed, if any ſuch are at hand, and without the formal permiſſion, in writing, of two of the Managers. The purpoſe of theſe long eſtabliſhed regulations is not to prevent that which is right from being done, but to prevent it from being done *improperly*, in violation of the feelings of thoſe moſt nearly concerned, for the gratification of idle curioſity, or as making the Hoſpital a ſchool, and the dead patients the ſubjects of anatomical inſtruction. The opening of the body of a dead patient in the Infirmary, even in caſes in which it is moſt to be wiſhed for the improvement of medicine and the good of mankind, often is prevented,

vented, by the relations or friends of the deceaſed refuſing their conſent; but I doubt whether it ever was, or ever will be, prevented by the Managers refuſing their permiſſion; certainly never without very ſtrong reaſons, and ſuch as are not likely to occur.

It would have been but fair to preſume, till there was ſome experience or evidence of the oppoſite conduct on their part, that the Managers would act at leaſt as wiſely, humanely, and liberally, with reſpect to their formal permiſſion of giving Port wine to a poor patient whoſe ſituation really needed it, and as ſuch, was deliberately made known to them by the attending Surgeon. But then, the honour and dignity of the profeſſion, ſo cruelly outraged by that order of the Managers, were not to be meanly ſacrificed by acquieſcing in it without a ſtruggle; and in one heart at leaſt (I truſt there were not many ſuch among the Surgeons) that noble principle ſeems to have been paramount to all ſentiments of reaſon, of duty, and of humanity. A poor man under cure, on account of a ſeverely ſhattered leg, came to be in ſuch a ſituation, that wine was highly neceſſary for him, and the Surgeon very properly ordered it; but being reminded by the clerk that it was neceſſary to aſk the permiſſion of one of the Managers, broke out inſtantly, " Aſk permiſſion of the Managers! God damn them, " do they think I will aſk their permiſſion," &c. Accordingly he did not aſk the neceſſary permiſſion; the poor man did not get the wine which he ſo much needed, and died in a few days. The accident had happened in the ſervice of a gentleman, who very humanely ſent the poor man from a conſiderable diſtance to Edinburgh, recommending him to a Surgeon with whom he was intimately acquainted, in order to get him admitted into the Infirmary. This other Surgeon, from whom I heard theſe very edifying particulars, and who for many years was employed by the gentleman in queſtion to pay an annuity to the poor man's widow, calling to enquire about the patient ſoon after the demur with reſpect to the wine,

wine, and finding that he was ſinking faſt, ſent him wine from his own houſe immediately, but too late to ſave his life.

I doubt whether any human laws provide puniſhment adequate to ſuch miſdemeanors: probably not; as no lawgivers could foreſee any thing in human conduct at once ſo abſurd and ſo atrocious: and if they were puniſhed with juſt rigour, it would be no reparation to thoſe who had ſuffered or died by them; nor would it prevent other patients from ſuffering in the ſame way, or in numberleſs other ways, by the folly, the arrogance, the quarrels, the caprice, or the brutality, of their Phyſicians or Surgeons, if all the members of ſuch numerous corporations had a right to practiſe on them indiſcriminately. If ſuch a right were eſtabliſhed, the moſt notorious offender could not be ouſted of it without a violent ſtruggle, and a formidable law-ſuit, invidious in its commencement, tedious and expenſive in its proceſs, precarious in its iſſue; and withal of ſuch a nature and tendency, that if it ended favourably for the ſick poor in the Hoſpital, it muſt bring ruin and infamy on thoſe medical practitioners whoſe miſconduct gave occaſion to it.

Among the other inſtances of great rhetorical merit in Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, I muſt not omit to mention the admirable dexterity with which he contrives to allude to one of *my* quarrels with one of *his* profeſſional brethren; who of courſe could not fail to be the object of his warmeſt eſteem, admiration, and affection.

" Nor ſhall we ever envy that man his private feelings, who can " differ from him on a moral cauſe." Theſe are the words of Mr John Bell; irreſiſtibly implying that my conduct in that buſineſs muſt have been very bad: but he knew too well what he was about, to venture to mention any particulars; and he was ſure that I would not mention them, becauſe I could not do ſo without the greateſt indelicacy to ſome individuals, to whom I ſhould be ſorry to give pain, and without bringing on myſelf the reproach of

vanity and oſtentation. This I ſay, in full confidence, that he knew abundantly well the particulars of that ſtory; which, much againſt my inclination, and in ſpite of my utmoſt endeavours to keep it ſecret, was very generally known a dozen years ago. If he really did not know the particulars of that ſtory, it muſt have been entirely his own fault; if he had choſen to enquire, he might have learnt them minutely, and on complete authority; the original papers relating to it, for good reaſons, having been carefully preſerved, and being to this hour in my poſſeſſion. On the ſame ſuppoſition (of his not knowing the particulars, or even the ſubject and general tenor of my conduct in that unpleaſant buſineſs), it muſt be acknowledged that there is infinite merit, not only in point of candour, but in point of talents, in alluding to it ſo briefly, but at the ſame time ſo ſignificantly and deciſively, as a matter of reproach, and one in which I had been notoriouſly to blame.

An orator of inferior genius and ſkill would no doubt have endeavoured to tell the ſtory in a manner unfavourable to me; which would have ſpoiled all. I doubt whether even the genius of Mr John Bell can accompliſh ſuch an undertaking; but if he thinks otherwiſe, he has my hearty conſent, provided only he can obtain the conſent of his dear friend, my opponent on that occaſion, to try to make the beſt, or the worſt, that he can of it.

Nor is that the only inſtance of his perfect ſkill in that figure of rhetoric which is called by the French *reticence*; or of his dexterity in applying to perſons, things, and ſentiments, the maxim which originally, I believe, related only to little ſuperfluous words, *ſupprimit orator quod ruſticus edit ineptus*. He ſays not one word of my conduct to one of my own profeſſional brethren; with which I muſt preſume he was well acquainted, as the perſon to whom I allude recommended him to Mr Peter Hill, bookſeller in Edinburgh, and prevailed, or aſſiſted to prevail, on Mr Hill, to undertake the expence and riſk of printing and publiſhing his anſwer to me. This I had the pleaſure to hear of accidentally, juſt about the time when

when his Pamphlet came out: but, wiſhing to have complete information on the ſubject, I begged of my friend Mr Creech, to aſk Mr Hill, whether the fact was ſo. He very obligingly did ſo; and informed me that Mr Hill aſſured him it was juſt as I had been told. I preſume I owe that good office, on the part of my learned brother, to his reſentment againſt me, for having told him, near three years before, that I ſhould never again meet with him in the exerciſe of my profeſſion. I had never had that honour but in the courſe of my attendance on *one* patient, to whom I was called in, after he had been for many weeks under the care of that other phyſician; whom, though much my ſenior, I had not chanced to meet with in conſultation till after I had practiſed phyſic in Edinburgh twenty-two years. I had not even heard of his mode of practice; and of courſe was completely aſtoniſhed at the ſpecimen he gave me of it. I ſoon diſcovered that my learned brother was not only a Phyſician, but a walking Diſpenſary: for ſcarce had I time to tell the patient what medicines we had in our conſultation agreed to give him, when he put his hands in his pockets, and produced the medicines in queſtion; or what he choſe to give as them. As the patient did not ſeem ſurpriſed, I took it for granted that he was accuſtomed to this mode of proceeding, and approved of it; and therefore I let it paſs without animadverſion. The ſame practice being continued day after day, I diſcovered, in little more than a week, that my learned brother ſometimes gave the patient *quid pro quo*, to the very evident riſk of his life. This the Doctor was obliged to confeſs, as I had taken care to give the patient a receipt for the proper medicine, which he got from a good apothecary, and compared with what his phyſician had diſpenſed to him.

Worſe than all, I ſoon diſcovered that he paid ſeparate private viſits to the patient, at which he unſaid all that had been ſaid after conſultation at our joint public viſits; and urged the patient, and at one time prevailed on him, to take again a medicine, which had

operated on him violently and unfavourably; on which account it had, at my inſtance, been diſcontinued: for I was as certain as I can be of any thing in phyſic, that the patient muſt have died under the continued uſe of it. Finding that, after two very plain but civil admonitions from me, he ſtill perſiſted in that improper conduct, I took my reſolution without further delay; and told him peremptorily that I never would conſult with him again.

As ſoon as I had fairly renounced all intercourſe with my profeſſional brother, I mentioned the circumſtances of the ſtory, without his name, to another of our profeſſion, who inſtantly gueſſed the name of the offender. This excited my curioſity, and I tried the ſame experiment on ſeveral others, both Phyſicians and Surgeons, all of whom, at once, gueſſed the ſame perſon; and ſome of whom gave me ſimilar, or, if poſſible, worſe inſtances, of the ſame mode of proceeding on his part, of which they had in their own practice had ample experience. This of courſe fully confirmed my reſolution never again to expoſe myſelf to ſuch vexations, or my patients to ſuch dangers. I have ſince learnt, without much ſurpriſe, that notwithſtanding my gentle admonition, that phyſician has perſevered in the ſame laudable practice, which has been attended with that kind of ſucceſs that was to be expected from it. I ſhall only add, on this point, that I hope Mr John Bell, however unfavourably he may think of me in all reſpects, will at leaſt give me credit for truth and ſincerity, when I aſſure him, that I do not envy him his friend; but, on the contrary, heartily wiſh him joy of ſuch a friend, and wiſh that he may find many ſuch worthy friends.

There is yet, in his Anſwer to me, another ſpecimen of the ſame figure of rhetoric, ſo complete and exquiſite of its kind, that to moſt people it will appear incredible and impoſſible. Indeed I muſt confeſs, that I never ſaw nor heard of any thing *ſimile aut ſecundum* to it. But every perſon who is poſſeſſed of his admirable

Anſwer

Anſwer may in a moment convince himſelf of the reality of that maſterpiece of rhetorical art to which I allude. Prefixed, by way of Preface, to the Anſwer itſelf, is a letter, ſubſcribed (by appointment of the Meeting of the Junior Members of the Royal College of Surgeons) by Walter Harkneſs, in which I am charged with groſs miſrepreſentation of the character and conduct of the younger Surgeons; and Mr John Bell is by them requeſted to draw up an Anſwer to my Memorial. This he has accordingly done, in a manner worthy of himſelf and them, as we have already ſeen. But in no reſpect is his Anſwer more meritorious than in this, that, in the whole of it, not one word is ſaid of the complete vindication which I had given him of my conduct and motives in publiſhing my Memorial. There is not even in his pamphlet the moſt diſtant alluſion to that intereſting correſpondence which we had in Auguſt 1800, ſoon after my Memorial was diſtributed, and in leſs than a fortnight after the taſk of anſwering it had been impoſed upon him by his younger brethren. In the beginning of his pamphlet, and indeed in the whole of it, from end to end, I am repreſented to the public as guilty of groſs miſrepreſentation of the character and conduct of the younger Surgeons, even after he had received from me the moſt complete refutation of that groundleſs charge. If he did not think my refutation of it in every reſpect complete and ſatisfactory, my letter, containing ſuch imperfect vindication of my own conduct, muſt have been to him an exquiſite ſubject for animadverſion and reproach. From his own ſilence with reſpect to it I may therefore infer, that he found it impoſſible to make that uſe of it. I may alſo infer, that his younger brethren, his clients, to whom, of courſe, it was his duty, without delay, to communicate my letter of vindication, could find no flaw in it; and conſequently I was obliged to think, that he and they were determined, right or wrong, to repreſent me to the public in that odious light, notwithſtanding

withſtanding the moſt explicit diſavowal of any ſuch unworthy purpoſe on my part, and the moſt complete refutation of ſuch a charge, in point of fact, that they themſelves could deſire or conceive. I may well call my vindication complete; for, on peruſing and conſidering it attentively, I am convinced, that, if I had gone but one ſtep farther, they would have conſidered it as irony and burleſque. Of the juſtneſs of this opinion every perſon may judge who ſhall take the trouble to read my letter to Mr John Bell, printed in this Memorial, (page 41. to page 74.). In one reſpect ſuch an ample vindication was plainly unneceſſary; for what one party of the Surgeons, Junior and Senior indiſcriminately, was pleaſed to call groſs miſrepreſentation of the character and conduct of the younger Surgeons, in the firſt place, was no miſrepreſentation at all, but a plain truth, ſo obvious to common ſenſe, that nothing leſs than actual experience of the fact could have made me believe that any individual, or any ſet of men, would preſume to call it in queſtion. In the ſecond place, Suppoſing it to be a miſrepreſentation, as groſs, as falſe, as injurious, as ever was contrived, it was plainly no miſrepreſentation of mine, but the work of their own predeceſſors, Deacon Kennedy and his accomplices. They, long before I was born, publicly and vehemently maintained, that Surgeons acquired great improvement by much practice, eſpecially by the frequent performance of operations; that all young Surgeons had great need of ſuch improvement, which they could get no where ſo well as in an Hoſpital; that a few Surgeons, ſelected from the reſt for Hoſpital-duty, would ſoon acquire ſuch high improvement and reputation, that they would engroſs the moſt lucrative practice in Surgery; and that to preſerve an equality among the Surgeons, it was neceſſary that all of them ſhould be allowed to attend and operate in the Hoſpital, indiſcriminately and by rotation. On the faith of this miſrepreſentation, if ſuch it be, that bargain between the Managers and Surgeons was made

which

which I reprobate, and have ſhewn to be unjuſt and cruel to the patients, and of little or no benefit to the Surgeons.

In the third place, Far from having expreſſed any unfavourable opinion of the younger Surgeons, I have, in many parts of my Memorial, expreſſed the very oppoſite ſentiments. I went ſo far as to give it as my opinion, that, if two or three of the younger Surgeons, or if the next who ſhould become Fellows of their College, were appointed permanently, or for a long period, Surgeons to the Infirmary, the practice of Surgery in it would ſoon be on a better footing than it has been for many years. In another paſſage of my former Memorial, I gave it as my opinion, that probably from the firſt, and certainly very ſoon, this ſelection of Surgeons for permanent attendance at the Hoſpital would be made from the younger Fellows of their College.

If I, or if any perſon, had ventured to ſay, that all the Junior Surgeons, even from the hour when they became Members of the College, were equal to the beſt of their Seniors in profeſſional ſkill, and manual dexterity as operators, it would have been regarded, not only as an extravagant falſehood, but as a malicious joke or ſarcaſm on their Senior Brethren: nor do I believe, that, till Mr John Bell's Anſwer appeared, ſuch a ſentiment had ever been announced to the world, either in jeſt or earneſt.

For theſe reaſons, while I admit the great rhetorical merit of ſuppreſſing my vindication of myſelf, I muſt be allowed to conſider it as the moſt uncandid proceeding I ever heard of. They cannot pretend that any conſiderations of delicacy towards me, whom it was the chief purpoſe of their Anſwer to revile and abuſe, as a monſter of wickedneſs, and equally an object of general contempt and abhorrence, or that any ſcruples about printing my private correſpondence with Mr John Bell, reſtrained him or his friends from making it the ſubject of their moſt public and ſevere animadverſion. The printing, as he has done, by way of Preface to

his

his Anſwer to me, the correſpondence which paſſed between him and his clients with reſpect to me and my Memorial, ſeemed to imply, in point of candour, that all papers and documents relating to that ſubject ſhould be made equally public. They ſurely would have regarded it as a ſtrange and uncandid proceeding on my part, if I had printed in this Memorial my letters to Mr John Bell, ſuppreſſing his letters to me, which contained his reaſons for appearing, contrary to his own deliberate opinion, and contrary even to his own declared reſolution, as the Champion and Advocate of that party of the Surgeons who have engaged in a conteſt with the Managers of the Infirmary. But further, I beg it may be obſerved, that, as ſoon as I knew that ſuch was his reſolution, I gave the moſt explicit permiſſion to him and his friends to uſe all manner of freedom with that letter of mine, juſt as much as with my printed paper. I had previouſly not only given him permiſſion, but begged of him to ſhow that letter to his friends and profeſſional brethren. Indeed I took it for granted, as a matter of courſe, that my letter of vindication, with his animadverſions on it, would make a conſpicuous figure in his Anſwer to my Memorial; and all I begged of him was, that he would abſtain from all remarks on grammatical or verbal inaccuracies, ſuch as words wanting, or twice written, or miſplaced; a kind of proteſt which I thought myſelf well intitled to enter. After all, I doubt not but Mr John Bell will contrive to juſtify himſelf, by ſhewing that he has only acted in ſtrict conformity to Horace's well-known maxim, *Et quæ deſperat tractata niteſcere poſſe relinquit.*

Whatever wrong Mr John Bell may have done me, by ſuppreſſing, on ſome occaſions, a great part of the truth, I am ſcarce entitled to complain of it, at leaſt not without doing him the juſtice to teſtify, that he has made ample compenſation for thoſe defects,

fects, by the moſt liberal additions to the truth on ſome other occaſions; by the diſcovery and enunciation of truths, particularly relating to myſelf, but perfectly unknown to me; and by the aſſertion of truths diametrically oppoſite to thoſe which I had formerly known, and which ſtill may be eſtabliſhed by incontrovertible evidence.

The moſt ſplendid example of this kind of rhetorical art, that I have ever met with, one far beyond the reach of any ordinary genius, and ſuch as the greateſt lawyers at the bar could not have attempted, nay hardly thought of, is to be found in the 44th page of his firſt ſection. There he does me the honour to mention me "as an author diſtinguiſhed in the literary and polemical world; "the *fifteenth* in a direct line of a Dynaſty of Profeſſors."

I know not how to expreſs my gratitude to Mr John Bell, for this long, learned, and illuſtrious pedigree, with which he has ſo liberally favoured me. This favour is the greater, that it is altogether ſurpriſing to me; no fewer than eleven of the fourteen of my direct lineal anceſtors, thus conjured into paſt exiſtence by his magic power, being utterly unknown to me; and, to the beſt of my information and belief, equally unknown to every perſon in the learned and in the unlearned world. They come however in excellent time to make a ſtem for my genealogical tree; a piece of furniture which, with ſhame and ſorrow I muſt own, I have never poſſeſſed. But before I can, with any propriety, make this uſe of my eleven new Great-grandfathers, I muſt beg of Mr John Bell to favour me with ſome authentic information of the countries and the Univerſities in which they were Profeſſors, and alſo of the ſeveral ſciences which they profeſſed. Perhaps he can prove, that the firſt ſeven or eight of them flouriſhed in Terra Auſtralis Incognita, and held Profeſſorſhips in the Univerſity of Utopia. That they were not all, eſpecially the firſt three or four of that long and learned dynaſty, Profeſſors of any ſcience, in any Univerſity in Scotland,

muſt be pretty evident from the following conſiderations. Fifteen generations, according to the well-known principles of chronology, which allow three generations to a century, extend to five hundred years; but five hundred, nay, even four hundred years ago, there was neither Profeſſor, nor Univerſity, nor Science, in Scotland.

If Mr John Bell's text had been given without any note or commentary, it might have paſſed for a flight of his original genius, ſimilar to thoſe which he has diſplayed in deſcanting on my perſon, character, and talents; and then his poſitive aſſertion of the marvellous number of my anceſtors who have been profeſſors, would have required no other notice, than his no leſs poſitive, and equally true aſſertions, that I was "born in Brobdignag, and "educated in Laputa; that, like the inhabitants of that land of "ſcience, I have one eye turned upwards to the heavens, while "the other looks inwards upon my own great mind; that I ſtep "over and over him and his brethren in all the pride of my gi-"gantic ſtature; and lift aſide the lappets of my coat to let them "paſs unhurt beneath the ſtride of my coloſſal limbs." But Mr John Bell's text, already quoted, is enriched and enforced by a moſt ample commentary, in the form of a marginal note; which, being of his own compoſition, muſt be regarded as of equal authority with his text itſelf. His note is in theſe words: "We "mention this on the *fame* authority. He is the fifteenth here-"ditary profeſſor in a direct line; *every year* this is mentioned "*publicly at lecture*; and we think it right to allow the author "this apology for ſome very extravagant ſentiments concerning "his own importance."

Firſt, as to the firſt of theſe ſhort ſentences; "we mention this "on the *fame* authority." The *fame* authority muſt mean the authority laſt quoted; but the authority laſt quoted by him, only eight lines before the reference to this note, is my own Memorial: but

but ſurely nothing like his marvellous aſſertion about the number of my anceſtors who had been Profeſſors, or any alluſion to them, is to be found in that Memorial from end to end.

Next, as to the clauſe of the ſentence, " *every year* this is men- " tioned *publicly at lecture.*" This muſt be underſtood to mean, mentioned by *me*, in *my* lectures, publicly, every year. The purpoſe of ſuch an aſſertion cannot be miſtaken. Mr John Bell certainly wiſhed his own aſſertion to be believed; I mean with reſpect to my mentioning in my lectures every year that abſurd and extravagant falſehood: which certainly imports, that he wiſhed to repreſent me to the public both as a liar and an idiot. I doubt whether I ſhould ever have had an opportunity to utter ſuch a bounce even a ſecond time; and I am ſure I could have had no occaſion to repeat it every year in my lectures: for, unqueſtionably, if I had even once hazarded ſuch an aſſertion, my character muſt have been well eſtabliſhed in both reſpects; as a liar, for aſſerting ſeriouſly what I could not believe, and muſt have known to be falſe; as an idiot, for telling a lie which no body could believe. Notwithſtanding Mr John Bell's poſitive aſſertion in his text, and the conduct of his brethren and clients, in ſanctioning, by their vote of thanks, his publication, I can ſcarce ſuppoſe either him or them ſo ignorant of the principles of chronology, of the common duration of human life, and of the hiſtory of ſcience in their own country, as ever to have given credit to that marvellous account of my pedigree, if they had all heard me publicly aſſert it; which certainly neither they nor any other perſon ever did. But indeed his great anxiety to give *me* as the author of that ſtory, irreſiſtibly implies that he thought it falſe, but wiſhed to throw the infamy of it on me.

The attempt on his part is moſt honourable; and the approbation which it has met with from his brethren and clients is quite characteriſtic of their diſpoſition and talents. I highly approve of

what he and they have done, and moſt earneſtly exhort them all to continue their honeſt and diligent endeavours for the ſame laudable purpoſe. Far from taking amiſs their conduct, I ſhall be much gratified by it; and I can aſſure them, nay demonſtrate to them *a priori*, that they will not labour in vain. They may proceed with confidence on this irrefragable dilemma. Either I am, or I am not, that liar and idiot which they wiſh to repreſent me. If I am, it is very fit that I ſhould be made publicly known as ſuch; and they will have great credit for making me known. If I am not that liar and idiot which they wiſh to make me be thought, it is equally fit that *they* ſhould be made known to the public; and they will have, and will deſerve, ſtill greater credit with all mankind, for making themſelves thoroughly known; which they will ſoon and moſt effectually do, by a few more attempts of the ſame candid, liberal, ingenious, and ſpirited kind.

It would be great injuſtice to the unknown author of an excellent joke on me, and a very ſucceſsful impoſition on the public, not to mention here the ingenious device, of publiſhing in the Edinburgh newſpapers in April laſt, an advertiſement in my name, purporting to be the announcing of a book written by me on Scottiſh Law, and on the number of our Judges, &c. By this innocent and very witty forgery, he had the pleaſure of making it believed, for three days, not in Edinburgh only, but all over Scotland, that I had gone ſtark mad. Any book written by me on ſuch a ſubject would have been pretty good evidence of inſanity: but to make this point doubly ſure, there was ſubjoined to the title of my pretended work, a long paragraph, a kind of puff of my former Memorial and of myſelf, that was quite deciſive, both as to my inſanity, and the ſentiments of the author of the forgery. As it could not be properly contradicted till the next days of publiſhing the ſame newſpapers, the joke took ſo well in the

the diſtant parts of Scotland, that many commiſſions for copies of Gregory on Scotch Law came pouring in on Mr Creech from all quarters. If I am rightly informed, ſome of our Lawyers, and even of our Judges, were *taken in* by that forgery.

It is hard to ſay whether Mr John Bell's reference to my annual lectures, in proof of his marvellous aſſertion, or his reference to my former printed Memorial, be the greater effort of his peculiar genius: but I think the latter is the more meritorious of the two; foraſmuch as every perſon who could procure a ſight of that Memorial, and, in the firſt place, *all* his clients, to each of whom I had given a copy of it, could eaſily aſcertain that the reference was falſe; whereas the many hundreds, nay ſome thouſands, who have attended my Academical Lectures, could only teſtify *negatively*, that they never heard me utter that extravagant falſehood.

That all whom it concerns may have a juſt notion of Mr John Bell's merit in this ſpecimen of his rhetorical art, and perceive clearly what noble additions he has made to a few plain truths, I ſhall ſtate briefly what the facts are of which he has made ſuch admirable uſe.

It is a melancholy truth, that I, and my anceſtors for ſeveral generations, have lived each of us by his own individual wits: and what is worſe, I fear it muſt be the caſe with the family for ſeveral generations to come, if the race ſhall continue ſo long. Certainly not one of us yet has had brains enough to amaſs a fortune, for the benefit of his poſterity: which many of the dulleſt greaſy rogues, that ever ſold cheeſe or tallow, have accompliſhed with eaſe. I acknowledge that my father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, as well as myſelf, have all been Profeſſors; and as my father's elder brother was a Profeſſor alſo, my dynaſty of Profeſſors, as Mr John Bell is pleaſed to call it, has been five in number. But I never dreamed of regaling my pupils with this very intereſting piece of my family hiſtory

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in my Academical Lectures; or of calling the attention of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary to it in my former Memorial: for this plain reaſon, that it had not the moſt diſtant relation to the Theory or Practice of Phyſic, or to the queſtion about the proper mode of attendance of the Surgeons in this Hoſpital. It was reſerved for the ſuperior genius of Mr John Bell to diſcover that it was of the higheſt importance, if not quite deciſive, in that queſtion: elſe ſurely he would not have introduced it, and inſiſted on it ſo ſtrongly, in his Anſwer to me. The only part of it that ever I mentioned in my Academical Lectures, and that not annually, but occaſionally, was the remarkable fate of my great-grandfather, who was Profeſſor of mathematics in this Univerſity near a hundred and thirty years ago. When a young man he loſt his ſight *ſuddenly*, by the diſeaſe called amauroſis or gutta ſerena, which proved *fatal to him in a few days.*

This I mentioned to my pupils as a curious medical fact; the diſeaſe in queſtion, though by no means rare, very ſeldom coming on ſuddenly, or proving fatal, and often coming on very ſlowly, and continuing, as in the caſe of Milton and many others, for twenty, thirty, or forty years, without impairing the general health of the body, or the faculties of the mind. My anceſtor's caſe was a proof and example, that the cauſe producing that kind of blindneſs, might be ſo deep ſeated, and of ſuch a nature, as ſoon to become fatal. I was particularly led, more than once, to mention his fate, having, in the courſe of twenty years attendance in the Hoſpital as Clinical Profeſſor, met with two caſes of complete gutta ſerena, both of which went on rapidly, though not ſo faſt as his, to a fatal termination.

But there was alſo in my family, though not among my lineal anceſtors, another dynaſty of Profeſſor Gregorys, coeval with mine for eighty years, which furniſhed another ſtill more curious and

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intereſting illuſtration of an important principle in phyſic. Three brothers of them were at one time Profeſſors of Mathematics; implying a ſtrong ſimilarity of mental conſtitution, or of talents, and peculiar genius in them all. As ſuch I have ſometimes mentioned it in my lectures, in proof and illuſtration of what I conceive to be the principle on which the hereditary nature of ſome diſeaſes depends. This I conceive to be reſolvable into the more general and well known fact, of what is commonly called family likeneſs; which is certainly often obſervable in many different individuals, though not in all, of the ſame family; which often miſſes one or two, perhaps even more, generations, and appears in a very diſtant one; which conſequently muſt often be found among diſtant collaterals of the ſame race; which is often remarkable not only with reſpect to features, complexion, ſtature, and form of body, but alſo with reſpect to every the moſt minute particular of the bodily conſtitution and health; which in many caſes is equally evident with reſpect to the conſtitution and peculiarities of the mind, not only as to the intellectual but even the moral faculties. All peculiarities of underſtanding, from perfect ſtupidity to the higheſt genius, and even to madneſs, including many modifications of genius, ſeem to belong to particular races. And every body knows, that many great and illuſtrious families have abounded in knaves, and others in fools and madmen, from generation to generation; and that in ſome families the knave and fool are ſo exquiſitely and happily blended, that it is impoſſible to ſay which prevails. Of peculiarity of genius in a family the beſt example, becauſe it is the moſt common and familiar, is the genius for muſic; which in ſome families is found great in almoſt every individual; while in other families there is not the leaſt of it. The genius for mathematics ſeems often to have been a hereditary peculiarity of the ſame kind. The two moſt remarkable inſtances of it, that I have heard of, and which accordingly I mentioned as

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ſuch to my pupils, are the Bernouillis of Baſle, and the Gregorys of Scotland; the latter, as I told them, I could mention without any vanity, as I had no pretenſions to mathematical genius myſelf.

To complete the hiſtory of that collateral dynaſty, I muſt mention, that two of the three brothers had each a ſon, who became Profeſſors alſo; ſo that there were five Profeſſors Gregory of that dynaſty, as well as of mine. Moreover, two of their ſiſters had each a ſon, both of whom were Mathematicians and Profeſſors; for, however marvellous it may appear, it is a certain fact, that, time immemorial, in the Gregory family, the women's ſide of the houſe has been almoſt as ſure as the men's. The laſt of that dynaſty in the female line, was the late Dr Reid of Glaſgow; the other was the late Mr Profeſſor Innes of Mariſchal College, Aberdeen.

It is not eaſy to conceive how all the three brothers ſhould have been lineal anceſtors of mine; and it is certain that neither they, nor their ſons, nor their daughters were ſo; nor their father either. That very mathematical old gentleman was an elder brother of my great-grandfather. He was not even a Profeſſor, but bred a merchant; and as ſuch ſettled in Holland; when, by the death of his immediate elder brother, he ſucceeded to a ſmall eſtate in the north of Scotland, of which he took poſſeſſion, and commenced country gentleman. But, though no Profeſſor, he was a good Mathematician; and withal of ſuch indefatigable zeal and activity for the advancement of mathematical ſcience, that he actually took the trouble to beget, in lawful wedlock, nine and twenty children; who of courſe eat up his eſtate; but he lived to ſee three of them Profeſſors of Mathematics at the ſame time; one of them at Oxford, one at Edinburgh, and one at St Andrew's.

Of all theſe very edifying particulars, ſo intereſting to the public in general, and eſpecially to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary; as being eſſential to the deciſion of their queſtion with the Surgeons, and accordingly introduced into the diſcuſſion by Mr John Bell,

Bell, with his uſual bad luck in all matters of fact; the only one that ever I mentioned in my lectures, was the fact of the three brothers being Profeſſors of Mathematics, which I mentioned very briefly, for the purpoſe already explained. It appears to me as characteriſtic and deciſive of that curious principle which I wiſhed to illuſtrate, as the more ſplendid example of family-likeneſs that occurred in one of the nobleſt families in England. In the joyous reign of Charles the Second, that Noble Family was reduced to three males; and there was not one Noſe among them.

On no one point has Mr John Bell's bad luck, with reſpect to matters of fact, been worſe than on this of the dynaſty of fifteen Profeſſors in a direct line.

He certainly choſe his ground well; the general principle to which he truſted, *neganti incumbit probatio*, is irrefragably eſtabliſhed, in all ſuch candid diſcuſſions as his. In plain Engliſh, every man is to be held guilty of every thing infamous of which he is accuſed; and no man is entitled to be believed, or even heard in his own defence. Indeed, it is hardly worth a man's while to ſpeak in his own defence; for a negative in general cannot be proved. If Mr John Bell had contented himſelf with declaring to the Managers, and to the public, that I told my pupils every year, publicly, at lecture, that one of my Grandmothers was a Judge, and the other a General Officer, I muſt have acquieſced in the charge, for I could not have proved the negative of it. He might have choſen to impute to me, as the aſſertor of them, ten thouſand other extravagancies, equally incredible and diſgraceful, not one of which I could have diſproved. But, with his peculiar bad luck as to matters of fact, he has imputed to me an extravagant falſehood; of which I can prove the negative in the only way in which a negative can be proved; that is, by proving an affirmative, which is inconſiſtent with it. This is the nature and

force of the proof of an *alibi*: now in this caſe I can prove an *aliter*.

In an account of the life and writings of Dr John Gregory, my father, prefixed to the complete collection of his works, publiſhed here about fifteen years ago, thoſe curious circumſtances relating to the number of thoſe of his name and family, who have been Profeſſors, are mentioned, without any impropriety that I can ſee: but ſurely there would have been the moſt ridiculous impropriety in mentioning them in my academical lectures. That biographical account of my father was not written by me, but by a gentleman well known in the literary world, who now has a ſeat on the Bench in the Supreme Court of Juſtice in Scotland.

I however furniſhed the materials for it, and am no doubt anſwerable for the truth of the facts therein ſtated, to the beſt of my knowledge, information, and belief. The account of the dynaſties of Profeſſors, given in that life of my father, will be found perfectly conſiſtent with what I have here ſaid of them, and abſolutely inconſiſtent with Mr John Bell's marvellous ſtory; which if any perſon chooſes to believe, he muſt alſo believe, that I had deliberately given to my pupils, and to the public, the moſt complete means of detecting the groſs falſehood that I annually endeavoured to impoſe on them.

Such abſurdity and inconſiſtency appear to me almoſt as incredible, as that I ſhould have been found in two different places at once.

All this however is to be underſtood with a *ſalvo jure* to Mr John Bell and his clients. If he or they chooſe to ſtake their character in point of probity and veracity on the truth of his aſſertion, by them adopted and ſanctioned, as I ſtake mine on the contradiction of it, they are heartily welcome, or more than welcome. I ſhall conſider their doing ſo as one of the greateſt favours that they can confer on me. I beg likewiſe, that this offer

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on my part may be underſtood to extend to all Mr John Bell's facts, which have been the ſubject of animadverſion and contradiction in this Memorial, from page 113. to the end of it. To have made this offer ſooner, as in diſcuſſing Mr John Bell's facts, which are inconſiſtent with authentic record, would have been conſidered by him as only inviting him to kick againſt the pricks. To have made the ſame offer when I was commenting on his ſplendid negative aſſertions, that I never entered the Surgeons wards, or the operation-room of this Hoſpital; never ſaw Mr Wood operate, never ſaw John Hunter operate, never even ſaw an operation, would have been ſtill worſe: for ſuch negatives, even if they had been true, could not be proved. Nay, I ſcarce think, after the elapſe of thirty years or more, that the oppoſite affirmatives, which I know to be true, can be proved; to have invited Mr John Bell therefore to prove ſuch aſſertions, would not only have been nugatory, but would have had the appearance of ſome wiſh or deſign on my part to withdraw the attention of the managers and public from matters really ſerious or ſhameful on my part, by engaging it on ſubjects of no moment to me, or to any other body. But on the ſubject of the dynaſties, and Mr John Bell's aſſertion with reſpect to my account of them, neither of thoſe objections can be pretended. If what he has aſſerted in his note already quoted, be true, it is deciſive with reſpect to me: and he may eaſily find ſome hundreds, or ſome thouſands of witneſſes, to confirm it on oath. I hope, therefore, he will not think it unreaſonable in me to beg of him to produce, in confirmation of what he has aſſerted, the affidavits of two or three dozen only of my *quondam* pupils. It would be abſurd to ſay, that I wiſh there may be in the world even one ſuch perjured miſcreant; but if there be any ſuch, I heartily wiſh them to be known, and to meet with that general credit and eſtimation which they deſerve. He will alſo, I hope, have the goodneſs to mention, and to get

his witneſſes to teſtify on oath, how my pupils behaved when they heard me utter that abſurd falſehood. Did they content themſelves with getting up, and leaving me to read a *wall*-lecture, which certainly they ought to have done; or did they pull my gown off my ſhoulders, and toſs me in a blanket? which, if not ſtrictly proper, would have been almoſt excuſable, and not in the leaſt wonderful.——Whatever he and his clients may chooſe to think or to ſay of me, they cannot ſurely pretend, that *all* my pupils, nay, hardly that *any* of them, have *always* been ſuch fools as to believe that extravagant falſehood, if they had heard me utter it. If even one of them had had but common ſenſe, he muſt infallibly have in one day expoſed me to the contempt and reproach of every ſtudent at the Univerſity.

From my conſidering ſo minutely that brilliant ſpecimen of Mr John Bell's rhetorical talents, it may be judged that I think it of peculiar conſequence, and wiſh to make an important uſe of it. Moſt men of candour, probity, and good ſenſe, eſpecially if they are unacquainted with medical controverſies, and the great latitude as to all matters of fact aſſumed by thoſe who engage in them, will hardly believe that Mr John Bell, even acting in the capacity of an Advocate, ſhould aſſert, and that his clients, even acting as a party, ſhould adopt and ſanction what they could not believe, and muſt have known to be falſe. I conſider Mr John Bell's marginal note already analyzed as complete proof of that point, which it is of conſequence for me to eſtabliſh: but to remove all doubts and difficulties with reſpect to it, I ſhall examine another almoſt equally brilliant ſpecimen of the ſame mode of proceeding, in him, and in them. This is another marginal note of his, at the bottom of the 54th page of his firſt ſection. His words are theſe: " I was very early, ſays the Memorialiſt, admit-
" ted behind the curtain, and underſtood the myſtery, and was
" diverted with the young drones ſitting liſtening to the hum of

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" the old drones." I acknowledge having ſaid, in my former Memorial, that, from my earlieſt youth, I was admitted behind the curtain, and let into the ſecret of the medical drama; neither of which propoſitions, I am ſure, will ever be diſputed by any perſon who knows what my education has been. It is the latter part of Mr John Bell's note, which I conſider as a good ſpecimen of his genius, and well worthy of an ample commentary. He there exhibits me as repreſenting my honoured inſtructors, Dr Monro, Dr Cullen, Dr Black, Dr Home, and my own Father, as a parcel of old drones, and my fellow ſtudents as a parcel of young drones; implying probably that I was ſuch a drone myſelf.

The peculiar merit of that part of his note conſiſts in this, that not only I had never ſaid or inſinuated ſuch an abominable and diſgraceful falſehood, but that I had ſtrongly expreſſed, and fully illuſtrated, the directly oppoſite and well-known truth. From the uſe which he hath made of my particular expreſſions, young drones, and old drones, it is plain that he had read and remembered the following ſentence in my former Memorial, " Our ſtudents, " far from being a parcel of young drones, liſtening quietly to the " hum of a few old drones, which is too generally the caſe in other " Univerſities, are commonly as eager to learn as we are to teach " them." (*Mem. p.* 207.). It is impoſſible to conceive a more complete perverſion of my plain meaning than Mr John Bell has accompliſhed, and his clients have approved and ſanctioned. They cannot, therefore, think I do them any injuſtice when I ſuppoſe them to have acted in the ſame manner on many other points, on which his miſrepreſentation appears only from the general tenor of his diſcourſe, but cannot be ſhewn ſo briefly and clearly by his falſification of one ſhort ſentence. And I think every intelligent and candid reader muſt, from theſe few ſamples, perceive the neceſſity of at leaſt ſuſpending his belief of every important fact, however confidently aſſerted by him, and ſanctioned by the public approbation

approbation of his clients, till ſuch time as he or they give ſome evidence of ſuch valuable, and generally ſuch marvellous facts.

Before I diſmiſs that firſt ſection of his Anſwer to me, I muſt take notice of Mr John Bell's heroic undertaking, to vindicate Dr Cullen from having acknowledged to my father, that he thought "*there muſt be a tub to amuſe the whale*;" and from having actually endeavoured to amuſe the whale in that way himſelf.

When Mr John Bell engaged in this perilous and fruitleſs adventure, he muſt ſurely have forgotten Pope's well-known couplet,

One from all Grub-ſtreet will my fame defend,
And, more abuſive, calls himſelf my friend.

Non tali auxilio nec defenſoribus iſtis tempus eget. Dr Cullen's character and talents need no vindication by Mr John Bell; and I have no occaſion to offer any arguments to prove in what high eſtimation I have always held him and his writings.

For ſix and twenty years that I have taught as a Profeſſor in the Univerſity of Edinburgh, firſt of the Theory, then of the Practice of Phyſic; and in conducting twenty Courſes of Lectures as Clinical Profeſſor, I have always availed myſelf of his writings, and of his verbal inſtructions; and have recommended in the ſtrongeſt terms, his valuable works to the attentive peruſal of all my pupils. This I conceive to be the moſt unequivocal proof of my opinion of his merits: far more honourable to him, as well as to myſelf, and much better for my pupils, than any profeſſion of blind admiration for him and his doctrines; or any reſolution never to diſſent from him, on any point, either of theory or practice.

I take the liberty, as it is my duty, occaſionally to differ from him, both in practice and theory; as he did from the many eminent medical authors who preceded him, and of whoſe valuable works

works he endeavoured to make the beſt uſe; and as I expect and wiſh that all my pupils ſhall do with reſpect to me, as the ſcience and practice of medicine gradually improve.

" A tub to amuſe the whale! Could Cullen indeed ſay this, Cullen, " the proud and jealous author of a doctrine which hath enſlaved " the Medical world, could he declare that doctrine to be a cheat? it " is not to be believed," &c. &c. " Vanity muſt have reſtrained " him, if no better ſentiment dwelt in his mind." (*Anſ.* §. 1. *p.* 52.) This is indeed ſetting about the buſineſs like a man of genius: to begin the vindication of Dr Cullen by pronouncing him proud and jealous for certain, and poſſibly vain alſo. I lived in intimacy with Dr Cullen for many years, and knew him well; yet never ſaw in him any ſymptoms of pride or jealouſy. As he was a man of ſenſe, not to ſay of ſuperior talents, I cannot think he was proud: for pride is characteriſtic of folly. Nor can I conceive of what, or of whom, he was jealous: certainly not as the author of that doctrine which Mr John Bell ſays hath enſlaved the medical world; for he was no more the author of that doctrine than Mr John Bell is. *Frederick Hoffman* was the author of that doctrine, as Mr John Bell ought to have known, and muſt have known, if he had ever looked into the writings of Hoffman, or had even read Dr Cullen's own preface to his Firſt Lines of the Practice of Phyſic. If Dr Cullen had taught that doctrine as originally his own, he muſt have been regarded, in the firſt place, by his own pupils, and in the next place, by the whole medical world, as the vileſt mountebank that ever appeared on any ſtage; for at the time he was brought from Glaſgow to Edinburgh, as Profeſſor of Medicine and Chemiſtry in 1756, and for many years before, that doctrine, as delivered in the writings of *Hoffman*, had been adopted by the ſtudents of phyſic in this Univerſity, even though their Profeſſors were endeavouring to teach them the doctrine of *Boerhaave*; whoſe pupils they had all been, and whoſe

zealous

zealous admirers they continued to be; as was the caſe with all his pupils. That fact, of the early adoption of Hoffman's doctrine by the ſtudents of phyſic in this Univerſity, I mention on the authority of my father; who, in the years 1743, 4, and 5, was a ſtudent of phyſic, and a member of the Medical Society, in this Univerſity.

Dr Cullen, I believe, when he taught phyſic at Glaſgow, had adopted the ſyſtem of *Hoffman*; and continued to teach it after he came to the Univerſity of Edinburgh: which contributed greatly to procure him the confidence, eſteem, and admiration of the ſtudents, and in due time the well-known familiar appellation of *Old Spaſm*; which, however ludicrous it may appear, never implied on their part any diſreſpect to him; but on the contrary the greateſt regard and affection. He always taught *Hoffman's* doctrine, like a man of ſenſe and candour, acknowledging, in the moſt explicit terms, who was the author of it, and doing juſtice to his great and original genius, his profound medical erudition, and the advantages which he had poſſeſſed by his long and extenſive practice; but not ſervilely adopting and inculcating every ſentence of *Hoffman's* doctrine; on the contrary, propoſing occaſionally ſuch corrections and improvements as he thought it required. Dr Cullen's preface to his Firſt Lines is the moſt complete and authentic document on this point that can be deſired or conceived: in it he not only mentions, in general, the ſyſtem of *Hoffman*, as what he moſt approved and had adopted; but gives (page 19, to 22, edit. 1784) a long quotation, much too long to quote here, for it extends to more than two pages, containing, in *Hoffman's* own words, the ſum and ſubſtance of his Theory, and his Principles of Practice in Phyſic.

The whole of Dr Cullen's Theory and Practice of Phyſic, as contained in his Firſt Lines, may be regarded as a kind of commentary on that paſſage of *Hoffman;* and, in this view, it is as ſtrict and faithful as Galen's Commentary on the Aphoriſms of Hippocrates.

Hippocrates. It was impoſſible for any man to have acted more candidly and honourably than Dr Cullen did in this reſpect; all the merit of which Mr John Bell, by a few words of his magic pen, would do away, and ſubſtitute for it the ſhameful demerit of the very oppoſite conduct.

But it is evident, that Mr John Bell's chief object, in his maſterly vindication of Dr Cullen, from the charge of ſometimes throwing out a tub to amuſe the whale, was to have an opportunity of expreſſing his diſtruſt either of my veracity, or of my father's, or of both. Conſidering how much better his means of knowledge muſt be, than either I or my father could have, of what paſſed in the moſt private converſation between Dr Cullen and my father, and between my father and me, more than thirty years ago; conſidering alſo how many illuſtrious examples we have already ſeen, of his accuracy and fidelity with reſpect to all matters of fact; it would be equally unneceſſary and unavailing to diſpute that point with him. I ſhall therefore content myſelf with giving him the ſequel of that ſtory, which, I hope, will afford him ſome good materials for his next Philippic.

The ſubject of my father's friendly hint to Dr Cullen, which produced his ludicrous avowal of the expediency of throwing out a tub to amuſe the whale, was the *Nervous Syſtem;* on which Dr Cullen uſed to deſcant, at great length, and with much vivacity and ingenuity, when he taught the Theory of Phyſic. To the beſt of my remembrance, he ſometimes employed about two thirds of his courſe, that is eighty lectures out of one hundred and twenty, on the Nervous Syſtem; illuſtrating very fully, and in a moſt entertaining manner, many hypothetical theories, about the nature and properties of a ſuppoſed nervous fluid or æther; the exiſtence of which ſtill remains to be proved. He even amuſed himſelf and his pupils, by adopting and inculcating ſome ingenious opinions, never yet eſtabliſhed by any competent evidence, concerning the

operations of the brain and nerves, and their ſuppoſed fluid, in various functions of the body, as, for example, in the ſecretion, preparation, conveyance, and application of nouriſhment to every part of the body. (*See Dr Cullen's Inſtitutions of Medicine, Part I. Phyſiology, parag.* 293, 294. *edit.* 1777.) Many of theſe opinions may be found ſtated in his own words in that little book, which was his text-book when he taught the Theory of Phyſic; and not only the opinions, but his mode of illuſtrating them, may be found in ſeveral of the Theſes publiſhed in this Univerſity between the years 1766 and 1774.

Many of theſe opinions were tacitly, and others more than tacitly, given up by Dr Cullen himſelf, both in his lectures and in his printed text-book, his Firſt Lines, when he taught the Practice of Phyſic. To the beſt of my remembrance, in the laſt fourteen years of his life, I never heard one word from him about vibrations or vibratiuncles in the nervous æther; or any thing about the nouriſhment being ſecreted from the blood by the brain, and conveyed from the brain by the nerves to every part of the body. Indeed this laſt opinion, however ingeniouſly illuſtrated, was abſolutely untenable, as there was not only no evidence *for* it, but complete and deciſive evidence *againſt* it.

Nor was even that opinion new, or peculiar to Dr Cullen: for it had been maintained by many ingenious, but fanciful theoriſts in phyſic, before his time. Of this every perſon intereſted in the queſtion may be convinced at once, by conſulting Dr Monro's great folio volume on the Nervous Syſtem, (page 77. to 87.) There they will find a brief enumeration of the deciſive arguments which refute the opinion in queſtion; and alſo an enumeration of no fewer than ten Medical Authors, prior to Dr Cullen, who had maintained that opinion. The name of Dr Cullen was ſuppreſſed in that enumeration, in which it ought naturally to have come the laſt, not from any diſreſpect to him, but, to my certain

certain knowledge, purely from conſiderations of reſpect and delicacy.

To ſuch diſcuſſions and ſpeculations, I conceive, that Dr Cullen alluded, by the metaphorical expreſſion of a tub to amuſe the whale. Whatever Mr John Bell may think of him, I think too highly of him, both in point of underſtanding and knowledge, to ſuppoſe that he could believe in doctrines, not only unſupported by evidence, but directly repugnant to it; or that he could ſuppoſe ſuch fanciful theories of any importance, or any application to practice. His anſwer to my father, I believe, put an end to that converſation; and precluded all further attempts, on my father's part, to remonſtrate with him on any doctrines that he might chooſe to teach: and I believe Dr Cullen took in good part that friendly hint, which my father gave him.

But a year or two afterwards an event occurred, relating to the ſame ſubject, which made Dr Cullen very angry, and gave my father ſome uneaſineſs.

In the *firſt* edition of the Edinburgh Encyclopædia Britannica, which, to the beſt of my remembrance, was publiſhed here in numbers, between thirty and five and thirty years ago, the article *Æther* made a conſpicuous figure. In that article, the doctrine of the Nervous Æther, and the whole of Dr Cullen's doctrine of the Nervous Syſtem, were very roughly handled. This, without ever mentioning Dr Cullen's name, or alluding to him as the author or aſſertor of ſuch doctrines, was done under pretence of diſcuſſing a certain Theſis, publiſhed in this Univerſity in 1768, on the cauſe of Animal Heat. In that Theſis (Guſtavus Richard Brown's of Maryland, *De Ortu Animalium Caloris*) the production of animal heat, and many other curious things, are referred to the ſuppoſed Nervous Æther and its vibrations. It was well known to every Student of Phyſic at the Univerſity at that time, and indeed it is avowed by Dr Brown in the whole of his Theſis, from the motto on his title-page to the concluding ſentence of his diſſertation, (which ſentence is quoted

in my former Memorial, page 210.), that it was the Theory on thoſe ſubjects taught by Dr Cullen. It was one of his tubs to amuſe the whale: and after it had ſerved its purpoſe for ſome time, and was a little ſhattered in the ſervice, he very wiſely withdrew it, and threw out another and another, ſo as to keep the whale effectually amuſed, and always playing about him. But as he had not forgotten my father's hint on the ſubject, as ſoon as the ſevere diſcuſſion of the Nervous Æther appeared in the Encyclopædia, he immediately ſuppoſed that it was written by my father. So fully poſſeſſed was he with this notion, that he mentioned it without much reſerve to ſome of his pupils, ſome of whom reported it to my father. I have heard that he mentioned his belief on that point to ſeveral other perſons: I know he did ſo to Mr Creech, the bookſeller. Nay, as I have lately learned from the preſent Mr Smellie printer, Dr Cullen, in converſation with his father, the late Mr William Smellie, one of the *Authors*, not the printer, of that edition of the Encyclopædia, told him that he was *ſure* that my father had written that article, and that he knew his ſtyle.

This muſt have afforded much amuſement to Mr Smellie, who was himſelf the author of that article; as my father ſoon learned from Mr Smellie: for he was ſo much piqued at Dr Cullen's unjuſt and ungenerous ſuſpicion, that he ſpared no pains to diſcover the real author of that well written but ſevere article, which had given ſuch offence, and been ſo raſhly imputed to him. Mr Smellie, for good reaſons, did not chooſe to be generally known as the author of it at that time; but I know that in the courſe of ſome years afterwards, Dr Cullen found him out, and was very angry at him accordingly. That diſcovery of Mr Smellie being the author of it, I have always underſtood, gave occaſion to the complete alteration and ſoftening of the article *Æther* in the ſecond and all the ſubſequent editions of the Encyclopædia; ſo that nothing of it was allowed to remain that could give offence to Dr Cullen.

Mr

Mr John Bell deſerves no ſmall credit for his happy diſcovery, that Dr Cullen's ludicrous expreſſion to my father was an acknowledgment, that the doctrine which he taught was all a cheat, and that I meant, by telling that ſtory, to convey ſuch a meaning, ſo inconſiſtent with truth, and ſo unworthy of Dr Cullen. His meaning plainly was, that while he endeavoured to inſtruct his pupils in the well eſtabliſhed and uſeful facts and principles of phyſic, which are often dry and tedious, ſometimes even diſguſting, it was neceſſary to beguile and animate them on their weary way, by amuſing them with more pleaſing proſpects, and engaging them in purſuits, which, by rouſing them to active exertions, might quicken their progreſs in their toilſome journey; even while they ſeemed to withdraw them fartheſt from the common beaten track. If Dr Cullen erred in this notion, his error at leaſt was not new in the world; and he might well have juſtified it by very high and ancient authority.

Id quoque enim non ab nulla ratione videtur,
Sed veluti pueris abſinthia tetra medentes
Cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum
Contingunt mellis dulci flavoque liquore,
Ut puerorum ætas improvida ludificetur
Labrorum tenus; interea perpotet amarum
Abſinthi laticem, deceptaque non capiatur,
Sed potius tali facto recreata valeſcat.

If Mr John Bell and his clients ſhall not underſtand, or ſhall reject the authority of ſuch a Heatheniſh writer as Lucretius, they muſt at leaſt be ſuppoſed to underſtand, that there is nothing contrary either to Law or Goſpel, in gilding a pill, or ſweetening a nauſeous draught; though neither the gold that covers the pill, nor the ſyrup that ſweetens the draught, add any thing to the

virtues

virtues of the medicines which they contain. But the beſt proof of the juſtneſs of Dr Cullen's principle, and of his ſkill and ſucceſs in applying it to practice, is the very high reputation which he ſoon acquired, and the number of his pupils who have riſen to eminence in their profeſſion, and who have contributed, by their active exertions, both to improve the practice of our art, and to extend the limits of our ſcience.

Every Phyſician of ſound unbiaſſed judgment, who is acquainted with the writings of Dr Cullen, muſt perceive and acknowledge, that his chief merit was not as a Theoriſt in Phyſic. He was indeed admirably acute and ingenious in detecting and expoſing the errors and imperfections of the theories of other ſyſtematic Phyſicians; but he was not equally ſucceſsful in eſtabliſhing many of thoſe theories, which he either formed for himſelf, or adopted from the great authors who had preceded him. The reaſon of his bad ſucceſs in that reſpect is abundantly obvious; he was not ſufficiently cautious as to the general facts or principles that he aſſumed, and too readily admitted, as his great predeceſſors had done, many vague and general hypotheſes or conjectures, which neither are nor ever can be proved.

But in truth, the explaining and illuſtrating, or eſtabliſhing, if they could be eſtabliſhed, ſuch ſpeculations and conjectures, is but a ſmall part, and certainly the leaſt important part, of the duty of a Profeſſor of the Theory and Practice of Phyſic. Numberleſs intereſting facts, with reſpect to the functions of the human body in health, with reſpect to the nature of diſeaſes, and the mode of operation of remedies, are as well known as the circulation of the blood, and ought to be carefully diſtinguiſhed from all ſuch ſpeculations and conjectures as are ſtill ſubjects of doubt and diſpute. Thoſe certain and important facts it is the duty of the Profeſſor to communicate to his pupils, and to ſhew the uſe and application of them, in explaining the ſymptoms, and in directing, as well as explaining,

explaining, the practice in various diſeaſes. Facts ſo numerous and ſo various can ſcarce be communicated, or, if communicated, can ſcarce be remembered, and applied, where they are moſt wanted, without the help of ſome connecting medium, by which they are linked together and arranged. This is one great uſe of what is called Theory in Phyſic; that is, Hypothetical Theory. A true and well eſtabliſhed theory, like that of gravitation in natural philoſophy, would anſwer this important purpoſe infinitely better than theories altogether erroneous and fanciful. But few, even of the worſt and moſt viſionary of our medical theories, have been ſo bad, as not in ſome meaſure to ſerve the purpoſe of connecting and arranging many intereſting facts. On this principle, I have long been convinced, that, not only in teaching and learning, but even in practiſing phyſic, a bad theory is better than none, provided only a Phyſician be not too ſtrongly or blindly attached to it. It is of real importance to him, not only to have ſome principle to direct his practice, or ſome reaſon, good or bad, for what he does; but alſo to have in view ſome principle by which to arrange and remember his obſervations; ſomething which he wiſhes either to eſtabliſh or to refute. This will make his obſervations more accurate, as well as more uſeful, than otherwiſe they could be made by any effort of induſtry or genius.

Whatever may be thought of the juſtneſs of this opinion, at leaſt it is not one aſſumed and profeſſed, to ſerve a particular purpoſe on the preſent occaſion. Any perſon whoſe curioſity ſhall lead him to look into my *Conſpectus Medicinæ Theoreticæ*, publiſhed more than twenty years ago, will find the ſame opinion ſtrongly expreſſed in the following words:

Præterea, non minima variarum quas Theoriæ Medicæ ſcriptores habuerunt opinionum utilitas fuit, res quas obſervando aut experiendo didiciſſent, et cum aliis communicare cuperent, quodammodo ordinare et in formam reducere, quæ aliter ſparſæ, et confuſæ, nulloque vinculo inter

ſe

ſe connexæ, neque memoria retineri potuiſſent, neque ad arbitrium revocari aut ſeligi. Laxo vero et fragili vinculo uti præſtabat quam nullo.

All this, however, about Medical Theories, and tubs to amuſe the whale, like every thing elſe in this Memorial, is to be underſtood always with a *ſalvo jure* to Mr John Bell and his clients. If he, or they, or any of them, think they can eſtabliſh as truths the various hypothetical opinions or theories with which Dr Cullen, in teaching firſt the Theory and afterwards the Practice of Phyſic, uſed to amuſe his pupils, they are heartily welcome to ſet about it with all their might, *manibus pedibuſque.* In his little book on the Inſtitutions of Medicine, already quoted, nay even in that part of it which treats of the Nervous Syſtem, they will find more than enough to keep them buſy for twice ſeven years to come; and, if they ſucceed in that great work, of which I can have no doubt, conſidering their talents, and the peculiar facility with which they diſcover numberleſs facts, that no other body ever dreamed of, and if I am alive at the end of that period, I ſhall point out to them, by way of another taſk, ten or a dozen paragraphs of Dr Cullen's Firſt Lines of the Practice of Phyſic, to be by them eſtabliſhed as matters of certain ſcience: which I think will afford them abundant employment all their days, if they do not, one with another, live more than a hundred years.

In the mean time, and till I find ſome books better for my purpoſe, I ſhall beg leave to uſe, for the inſtruction of my pupils, Dr Cullen's Works, purely on account of the many valuable, well eſtabliſhed, and well arranged facts, which they contain, with reſpect to the ſymptoms, the cauſes, and the cure of diſeaſes; though I diſtruſt his theories with reſpect to the manner in which thoſe ſymptoms are produced, and the mode of operation of ſome of the remedies which he recommends. Thoſe theories I conſider as a kind of Apocrypha, allowed to remain between the Canonical books of the Old and thoſe of the New Teſtament; which Apocrypha

crypha every ſtudent is well entitled to believe or to reject, according to the meaſure of his own underſtanding and faith. He may be an equally good Phyſician whether he believe it or not.

Relating to this, there is a curious alluſion in Mr John Bell's Pamphlet, (Section 1. page 54.). " To know his (Dr Cullen's) " Theories, to repeat his Definitions, to profeſs to be the admirer " and defender of Cullen, has always been in this Univerſity the " *ſole* and *ſure* paſſport to Medical honours. Nor has this regimen " and academic diſcipline relaxed of late years; to theſe dogmas, true " or untrue, is every young man obliged to yield aſſent, " mouth, " honour, breath, which the poor heart would fain deny, but " dare not." In what light muſt this forced obedience appear, " now, when the doctrine is declared to be a tale! a very cheat?"

This is another illuſtrious ſpecimen of Mr John Bell's ſuperior genius, and of his cruel bad luck with reſpect to all matters of fact. It is indeed wonderful how he could ever think of ſuch facts as theſe; the direct contrary of which might have been known, and almoſt demonſtrated *a priori;* and has been amply experienced by many hundreds, and repeatedly publiſhed to the world. He and all his clients might have known, for it never was a ſecret, that in more than three and thirty years, that Dr Cullen taught as a Profeſſor in the Univerſity of Edinburgh, there never was a time when *all* his Colleagues, Profeſſors of Phyſic, or even the majority of them, taught, or admitted, thoſe peculiar hypothetical theories of which he was the fondeſt; whether originally his own, or adopted by him from *Hoffman*, *Stahl*, and others, is of no moment at preſent. To the beſt of my knowledge and belief, there never was a time when even *one* of his Colleagues admitted thoſe theories; nor do I believe they ever were admitted by the other Phyſicians, Fellows of the Royal College in this City, who had not been his pupils, or by any great number of Phyſicians, if by any, in the three kingdoms, who were his ſeniors

or cotemporaries, and not his pupils. And I had good occaſion to obſerve, between fourteen and nine and twenty years ago, that in London his doctrine, which Mr John Bell ſays had enſlaved the Medical world, was treated with great contempt.

To me it appears incredible and abſurd, if not literally impoſſible, that his Colleagues, four or five in number, ſhould have concurred in impoſing *forcibly* on their pupils, a faith, or profeſſion of faith in Medical opinions, which they themſelves neither entertained nor profeſſed. Suppoſing them to have had but common ſenſe, and any, the ſmalleſt, notion of what ſcience is, which may fairly be preſumed of them all, till we have evidence of the contrary, it cannot be believed that they would exact from their pupils ſuch profeſſions of belief, even in thoſe opinions which they themſelves thought moſt probable.

They ſurely muſt have known the infinite difference between opinions, however plauſible, and matters of ſcience, fairly aſcertained, by obſervation and experiment, and ſtrict induction from theſe.

In point of fact I may ſtate with confidence, that in the courſe of ſix and twenty years, I have aſſiſted at more than a thouſand examinations of Students, who were candidates for the degree of Doctor of Phyſic in this Univerſity, and that I never ſaw nor heard of any ſuch irrational, illiberal conduct on the part of the Profeſſors who examined them.

Our examinations do not turn on points of opinion, or theory, or controverſy; and when, incidentally, any queſtions are put relating to ſuch points, it has always been underſtood among us, that a Student was entitled to judge and chooſe for himſelf. We are always pleaſed when a Student ſhows by his anſwers, as many of them do perfectly well, that he is acquainted with the different opinions that have prevailed on ſuch points; and with the arguments that have been urged for and againſt them reſpectively. If

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any Student chose to adopt the hypothetical opinions of Dr Cullen, we had no right, and could have no inclination, to judge unfavourably of him on that account.

If a Student, when desired to describe the principal and distinguishing symptoms of a disease, answer us in the words of Dr Cullen, by giving us the definition of the disease as stated by him in his Methodical Nosology, we have good reason to be well satisfied with his answer: but we are still better satisfied, when a Student describes a disease by enumerating its distinguishing symptoms in his own words, though perhaps less accurate and scientific than those of Dr Cullen. In either case, we must presume that such a Student has learned enough to know such a disease when he meets with it, and to distinguish it from all others. This is the chief use of Methodical Nosology and its definitions. Whenever we find a Student repeating fluently and accurately the words of such definitions, and yet hesitating in his answers to other questions, we are apt to suspect that he has got the definitions by rote, as part of his *catechism*, perhaps without understanding them: and we take care to ascertain that point, by a little cross questioning; just as when we find a Student giving an imperfect definition or description of a disease, we discover, by putting further questions to him, whether he really knows all the important symptoms of that disease or not.

I think it probable that some Students have obtained the degree of Doctor of Physic in this University during Dr Cullen's incumbency, without ever attending his lectures, or knowing his doctrines, as I know that some have done without ever attending mine. At any rate, there was nothing to hinder them to do so; for our laws, which are made as generally known as possible, do not require of our Students that, in order to be admitted to examination for the degree of Doctor of Physic, they shall attend the lectures of *every* Professor of Physic in *this* University, but only, that

they ſhall attend the lectures of Profeſſors on the ſeveral branches of Phyſic, in this or ſome other Univerſity.

It was the object of the Profeſſors of Phyſic, and of the Senatus Academicus of this Univerſity, in framing thoſe laws, to act in the moſt liberal manner, by putting attendance on the lectures of Profeſſors, or teachers by public authority, in other Univerſities, on the ſame footing with attendance on their own lectures.

Laſtly, In direct oppoſition to Mr John Bell's moſt ſplendid fact, there are extant many inaugural diſſertations, publiſhed in this Univerſity during the laſt twenty years of Dr Cullen's incumbency, that contain the ſtrongeſt poſſible aſſertions of doctrines very different from his, and many ſevere ſtrictures on the doctrines which he taught. It would be indelicate, or ſomething worſe, perhaps ſeriouſly injurious, to the authors of thoſe diſſertations, were I, in ſuch a Memorial as this, to mention their names, and quote particular paſſages from their diſſertations, in proof and illuſtration of what I have here ſtated; for I know that ſome, and ſtrongly ſuſpect that many of them, have lived long enough to perceive the errors of many doctrines which they had at one time moſt confidently aſſerted, and even to be aſhamed of what they had written. But every perſon, who has any curioſity on the ſubject, may ſatisfy it at once, by looking into ſome of the many Theſes publiſhed in this Univerſity between the years 1778 and 1790, and containing either quotations from *Brunonis Elementa*, or marginal references to that work. Mr John Bell's felicity, in his mode of vindicating Dr Cullen, and in the many new and marvellous facts which he has diſcovered for that purpoſe, is indeed moſt admirable. Let us ſuppoſe for once, what it is *impoſſible* to believe, that Dr Cullen wiſhed to enforce the admiſſion, and profeſſed belief, of all his doctrines, among his pupils, by thoſe arbitrary proceedings, and that kind of perſecution which Mr John Bell has ſtated in the paragraph juſt now quoted from his Pamphlet;

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let us ſuppoſe farther, that all his colleagues had the folly and turpitude to concur with him in thoſe unworthy meaſures; let us conſider what the neceſſary conſequence *muſt* have been, both with reſpect to himſelf and his pupils. Such conduct on his part, and the motives of it, muſt have become ſoon and generally known, and muſt have rendered him infamous. With reſpect to his pupils, far from making them converts to his doctrine, and eager aſſertors of it, it muſt have made them its greateſt oppoſers; and Dr Cullen, inſtead of being the favourite and idol of his pupils, muſt have been the object of their contempt and abhorrence. Such, unqueſtionably, is human nature; at leaſt in all who feel the liberal ſpirit of truth and candour, and follow with enthuſiaſm the purſuits of ſcience, ever jealous and impatient of authority, and indignant at the thought of reſtraint or oppreſſion.

From Mr John Bell's pretended vindication of Dr Cullen, which ſeems to have been intended ſeriouſly, not as a piece of ſarcaſm and irony, and from the approbation that it has met with from his friends and clients, it appears indiſputably, that there are men, and theſe too profeſſing great regard to ſcience, to virtue, to liberality of ſentiment and conduct, who would not have been ſhocked or diſguſted by ſuch illiberal conduct in Dr Cullen, and in ſpite of it, would have regarded him as well entitled to the eſteem and admiration of mankind. If each of them had put a clear window in his breaſt, he could not have ſhown us more plainly his own ſentiments, his own character, and his own notions of ſcience.

The whole of that vindication is ſo complete and original, and characteriſtic of its author, that it is needleſs to diſcuſs it more fully: but as an explanation of what I have hinted, that it was *impoſſible* to believe ſuch things of Dr Cullen, I muſt mention what Mr John Bell and his clients ſeem totally to have overlooked, that Dr Cullen ſtated *all* his hypothetical theories with great modeſty, and many expreſ-

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ſions of doubt and diffidence, and many ſtrong acknowledgments of their imperfections. If Mr John Bell and his clients had read his works with attention, they muſt have perceived this, and have been ſtruck with it: and if they had read the writings of any other ſyſtematic Phyſician or Theoriſt, from Galen to Boerhaave inclu-ſive, they muſt have ſeen, that thoſe ſyſtematic authors were not equally cautious and modeſt, but generally inculcated their doc-trines with perfect confidence, as well-eſtabliſhed truths, and ſometimes maintained them with moſt dogmatical arrogance and inſolence; juſt as ſome modern writers in Phyſic and Surgery aſſert their own dogmas, and revile their opponents. That can-dour and modeſty which Dr Cullen diſplayed in his ſyſtematical writings, both with reſpect to the ſufficiency of his theories, and the efficacy of the medicines and practice that he recommended, was an excellent leſſon to his pupils, and certainly contributed much to recommend both himſelf and his doctrines to them: but it evidently precluded, and rendered *impoſſible*, even if he had been diſpoſed to try it, which I am ſure was not the caſe, any attempt to cram his doctrine down their throats. Mr John Bell and all his clients muſt be deplorably ignorant of human nature, if they do not know that man is the moſt perverſe of all animals; and they muſt be ignorant even of the common principles of animal nature, if they do not know what effect ſuch tyranny has on the moſt gentle and docile of quadrupeds, and withal the moſt affection-ately attached to his maſter. A dog, who is paſſionately fond of his bone, and will fight ſtoutly for it, when allowed to chooſe and pick it for himſelf, as ſoon as it is tied faſt to his tail, hates it, and the perſon who tied it, worſe than poiſon; and barks, and howls, and runs away as if the devil were at his heels.

It is delightful to obſerve how Mr John Bell's ſtyle riſes with his ſubject, and how his warmth increaſes with its warmth. His animadverſions on what I have ſaid of the prevalence of profeſſional diſputes and party-ſpirit in that Royal College which has the honour to boaſt of him as a Fellow, diſplay a degree of eloquence and fire, worthy of that Society, and that cauſe which he defends, and far ſuperior to any thing contained in the preceding part of his Pamphlet. To quote here the whole of thoſe animadverſions, though delightful, would be ſomewhat ſuperfluous, as a ſmall ſample may well ſuffice. " You are now, for the firſt time, " informed, that there are two parties among the Surgeons in this " city. Why are you told this? Is it your concern? Parties in " philoſophy, in politics, in profeſſions, in religion, and alſo in " morals, are not diſavowed; but in the univerſal ſentiment of " philanthropy and charity, in that feeling without which a man is " degraded from his nature! who before your Memorialiſt, has " dared to ſay, that there are parties?

" Who but your Memorialiſt would dare to ſay, that a Surgeon, " if any diſaſtrous event ſhould befal him, requiring ſurgical " aſſiſtance and a capital operation, would (if he were forced to " receive that aſſiſtance from ſome of his profeſſional brethren) " give himſelf up for loſt?" (*Anſwer*, *Sect.* 3. *p.* 9.)

Firſt, As to the latter part of this ſplendid paſſage, I need only ſay, that I have heard of one remarkable inſtance of a Surgeon, a Fellow of the Royal College of this city, actually performing on himſelf a pretty ſevere operation; which implied, that he either could not, or would not, truſt any of his profeſſional brethren to do it. And I have heard ſome Members of that Royal College ſpeak of ſeveral, even of the moſt eminent of their brethren, in ſuch bitter terms of contempt and reproach, for their ignorance, unſkilfulneſs, and negligence, that I am ſure they would not have truſted their own perſons in ſuch unworthy and dangerous hands.

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But I never ſaid nor thought generally, that a Surgeon, in the ſenſe of every Surgeon in Edinburgh, would give himſelf up for loſt, if he were forced to receive profeſſional aſſiſtance from any one of his brethren; which is the meaning that Mr John Bell's words convey. But that being a matter of fact, his uſual bad luck attended him in ſtating it, even though he had it in his power to tranſcribe my very words.

Further, From the opinions which ſome Surgeons have expreſſed openly, either by word of mouth, or by writing, or both ways; and the diſapprobation, not to ſay contempt and reproach, that they have expreſſed for the mode of proceeding of ſome of their brethren in various parts of chirurgical practice, it is impoſſible to doubt that they would think themſelves expoſed to peculiar danger, if they were obliged to receive chirurgical aſſiſtance from ſuch men. But to cut that matter ſhort, Mr John Bell, if he pleaſes, may declare publicly, whether, if he had occaſion to be cut for the ſtone, or to undergo the operation for the radical cure of the Hydrocele, he would or would not think himſelf expoſed to peculiar danger, if his dear friend and nameſake Mr Benjamin Bell were to be the operator, and were to perform either of theſe operations in the way that he recommends in his Book on Surgery, and has been accuſtomed to perform them with ſucceſs.—— But this is a point of no moment, in compariſon of the great object to which he has irreſiſtibly called our attention.

In no part of his Anſwer has Mr John Bell come ſo near to giving me a little credit for ſome diſtant approach to veracity, as in the following. (*Sect.* 3. *p.* 10.) " If he inform you there are " *two* parties, you may be aſſured there is *one*." It is plain, that when he penned this ſentence, he muſt have had in view the vulgar maxim, that people ſhould not believe more than one half of what the world ſays; as in the common caſes, of a young lady ſaid to have lain in privately of twins, or of a gentleman ſaid to have

have been twice detected cheating at cards, and twice uſing loaded dice.

The fact that there prevailed in the College of Surgeons a moſt rancorous ſpirit of party, being publicly notorious, could not be denied. It therefore was his buſineſs to make the *beſt*, that is, to make the *leaſt* poſſible of it. To this urgent neceſſity, which has always been found the mother of invention, and to his happy remembrance and ingenious application of a trite vulgar maxim, we owe the noble diſcovery, that the Royal College of Surgeons may be divided into *one*, and this one a moſt inveterate party. As this diſcovery was not made in Ireland, it cannot be called a *bull*; but it is a good *imperialiſm*, and one of the fineſt examples I have ever ſeen of what may be done by ſuperior genius. Any ordinary perſon, nay, even our Profeſſors of Logic and of Mathematics, would be apt to ſay, If there be *one* party, you may be aſſured that there are at leaſt *two* parties, perhaps more. Indeed, I ſuſpect both thoſe learned Profeſſors will be much alarmed, and diſpoſed to give themſelves and their ſciences over for loſt, when they hear of this portentous diſcovery. For if any whole may be divided into *one* part, which when the whole conſiſt of a number of perſons is called a *party*, ſo may every whole, or any quantity be; ſuch as a line, a ſurface, or a ſolid; a cheeſe, or a landed eſtate. Then ſuch a part or party, as there is no other part of the whole, muſt either be the whole, or at leaſt *bona fide* equal to the whole. Then this *one* party of the Royal College, having no other party to clapperclaw and to revile in print, and yet being unable to abſtain from ſuch exerciſes, muſt either have been clapperclawing and reviling itſelf without mercy, or clapperclawing and reviling nobody at all. Nay more, that party, individually and collectively, has been engaged in divers moſt inveterate law-ſuits, and has been proſecuted for very heavy damages: that is, it has either gone to law with itſelf, and proſecuted itſelf for heavy damages,

on account of groſs, opprobrious, inſufferable wrongs, done by itſelf, to itſelf; or it has been embroiled in law-ſuits, and proſecuted for ſwinging damages, by certain Non-Entities, pretending to be members of a party that they know does not exiſt, any more than they do themſelves; though they are unqueſtionably Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, and no Members of that party of it which they are proſecuting for various wrongs done to them. Two of theſe Non-Entities have had the unparalleled preſumption to proſecute the one and only party in their College, for depriving them of certain rights which the ſaid Non-Entities pretended to have as Members of the College. Another of thoſe Non-Entities has carried the joke ſtill farther, by pretending to have been the Preſident of their College, and to have been turned out of his Chair of Office, and cenſured publicly, in very harſh terms, by a party to which he did not belong, and which he has ſince proſecuted in a Court of Juſtice, laying his damages at L. 1000. Never was a Court of Juſtice in this world ſo bamboozled. If every Judge in it had got to his own ſhare the whole brains of Ariſtotle undivided, ſtill the puzzle would have been inextricable and hopeleſs: a law-ſuit, or ſtill worſe, many law-ſuits, carried on with the greateſt inveteracy, and only one party in them all, muſt always be to Judges as great a ſtumbling-block as a part equal to the whole generally proves to Mathematicians.—— Compared to this, the ingenious *quizzing* of My Lord Preſident was but a ſchool-boy's trick, and plainly the work of a much inferior genius. The joke conſiſted in making him believe, that he was a Party and not a Judge, or at leaſt doubt which he was, the very day that the cauſe between the College of Surgeons and the Managers of the Infirmary came before the Court; and was perpetrated by giving him notice, (falſely), juſt before he took his ſeat on the Bench, that he had the day before been elected a Manager of the Royal Infirmary. It was ſuppoſed, with much probability,

bability, that the very little reverence which, on ſome preliminary point of the cauſe, his Lordſhip had expreſſed for the pretended contract of 1738, ſuggeſted that curious expedient to ſet him aſide as a Judge. But the chief merit of it was, that it went ſo very near to that nice and dangerous figure of logic, called *Bocardo*; which the beſt logicians of Oxford have always dreaded, it being ſo eaſy to get into it, and ſo difficult to get out of it. This will be found well explained in the Claſſical Dictionary. See *Quod.*

That figure of rhetoric, the interrogation, of which Mr John Bell has ſo nobly availed himſelf, has always been regarded as the moſt animated and forcible apoſtrophe. The doctrine of Longinus on this ſubject, and the ſtriking examples of it in the orations of Demoſthenes, muſt no doubt have been freſh in his memory, when he penned thoſe admirable queſtions which I have quoted from his Anſwer to me. Such queſtions too have many advantages, which Longinus has not pointed out, but which Mr John Bell ſeems to have underſtood perfectly. A queſtion can neither be contradicted nor refuted; for, unlike a propoſition, it can neither be true nor falſe, and yet it may convey, more ſtrongly than any propoſition can do, the ſame important meaning; for example, " Who, before your Memorialiſt has dared to " ſay that there are parties?" The meaning conveyed by this queſtion is eſſentially the ſame with, No man before your Memorialiſt has dared to ſay, that there are parties among the Surgeons of Edinburgh, and all that he has ſaid about them is falſe, and a mere fiction of his own. He is, I believe, right in ſaying, You (the Managers) are now for the firſt time informed, that there are parties among the Surgeons of this City; if, by this, he means that it is the firſt time that the Managers have been told of it in a printed Memorial addreſſed to them. But if he means by it, that the Managers never before knew or heard that there were parties among the Surgeons, nay, violent and inveterate parties among

them, he is as completely miſtaken as he has been with reſpect to any of the facts which he has moſt confidently aſſerted in the regular form of propoſition.

In proof of this I need only ſtate, that two of the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons always are Managers of the Royal Infirmary, and by its Charter muſt be ſo. To this I may add, that the inveterate ſpirit of party which prevails among the Surgeons, has been ſo fully diſplayed in word and deed, in writing and printing, that no Manager of the Infirmary, who took a heartfelt intereſt in the welfare of the Hoſpital, could be ſuppoſed ignorant of it, or indifferent to it.

As to his queſtions, Why are you told this? Is it your concern? I anſwer briefly, that it was told them by me, becauſe it was very much their concern; and that it was told them publicly, in a printed Memorial, very generally diſtributed, becauſe it is the concern of the public, and chiefly of the ſick poor, for whom the Managers are but Truſtees. It was fit that the public ſhould know, what the Managers had long known and lamented; what they had at firſt endeavoured, but in vain, to prevent; and what they had repeatedly endeavoured, but equally in vain, to rectify. It was fit that the public ſhould know, at leaſt in general, for I carefully avoided mentioning particulars, the chief of the many ſtrong reaſons that the Managers had, for making a deciſive effort to get rid of an evil, which had long been great, and was daily increaſing. It was not on account of occaſional differences in opinion, or accidental perſonal quarrels, or profeſſional rivalſhip among ſome individuals Members of the Royal College of Surgeons, that the attention of the Managers, and of the public, was called on the preſent occaſion to their inveterate warfare; but on account of that rancorous ſpirit of party, and that implacable animoſity which prevailed among them, and rendered the conſulting-room a ſcene of endleſs wrangling, and the operation-room a ſcene

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of the moſt malignant criticiſm; which often fruſtrated the benevolent purpoſe for which the Hoſpital was eſtabliſhed, and had actually driven from the duties of it ſome of the moſt reſpectable Surgeons who had ever practiſed in this city.

As to "that univerſal ſentiment of philanthropy and charity, "in that feeling, without which a man is degraded from his na-"ture!" which Mr John Bell ſo boldly thruſts in our faces, the beſt commentary on it, and the beſt explanation of its real nature and value, will be found in the unanimous reſolution of the Royal College of Surgeons, 9th of Auguſt 1784; in which it ſtands on record, that they would not give the Managers an opportunity of making alterations, however good for the Hoſpital, that is, for the ſick poor in it, which would not be for the benefit of the Royal College.

Though peculiarly ill qualified for the taſk, I ſhall endeavour to convey to the Managers and the public, ſome notion of that ſtate of inveterate warfare, which, from the uniformly concurrent teſtimony of many competent witneſſes, I have long underſtood to prevail among the Surgeons. That I may do no injuſtice to any individual, or any party of them; or be ſuppoſed to impute to the preſent Members of their College, the ſentiments and actions of their predeceſſors more than twenty years ago, I ſhall divide the ſhort time of their eternal war, which I have had occaſion to hear of, into three different periods. The firſt of theſe extends from the time when I firſt had occaſion to hear of it, that is, from the time when I ſettled as a Phyſician in Edinburgh, about ſeven and twenty years ago, to the time when Mr John Bell became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons; it being expreſsly declared that he, and his Junior Brethren, can have no ſhare either in the merit or demerit of any thing ſaid or done during that firſt period; and it being underſtood that they may, if they pleaſe, be thought ignorant of all that paſſed during that time. The ſecond period extends

tends from the day when Mr John Bell became a Fellow of that Royal College, to the day when my former Memorial was diſtributed.——It will not, I hope, be thought either unreaſonable or uncandid, to ſuppoſe, that he, and many of his Junior Brethren, know at leaſt the general tenor and ſpirit of the tranſactions of their own College during their own time; and even that they are well acquainted with many particular facts and circumſtances, whether they had any concern in them or not.——The third period extends from the time when my former Memorial was diſtributed to the preſent hour. This eventful period might well afford materials for many volumes, as in fact it has already done, for many volumes of law-papers, which may almoſt be ſaid to be written and printed in letters of gold; that is, in letters which have coſt much gold. But, as the moſt important events in this laſt period are already well known to the Managers and the Public, it is unneceſſary for me to enlarge on them; eſpecially as Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; yet lives, a proſperous gentleman, and I truſt will think the ſubject not unworthy of his pen.

As to the firſt of thoſe periods, I can teſtify in general, that from the time I ſettled in Edinburgh, I heard ſo much, and ſo often, of their diſputes and their brawls, both in their conſultations in the Infirmary, and at their convivial meetings, both of the College as a body, and of clubs, conſiſting chiefly of members of the College, that I reſolved peremptorily never to be a member of any of thoſe clubs, nor even a viſitor at any of their meetings. From what I heard of them, I ſhould have thought them moſt unpleaſant meetings; and I could not have been a member of any of their ſocieties without ſiding with one party or other, which I was reſolved never to do, conſidering it as both irrational and illiberal. I was always at pains to avoid being informed of the nature of their diſputes and parties, or even of the ſubjects of their altercations: but I could not avoid hearing ſometimes of ve-

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ry diſgraceful brawls which took place among them. Some of theſe were deſcribed in ſuch lively and ludicrous terms, and with ſo many ſtrange circumſtances, that it was impoſſible not to ſuſpect ſome degree of fancy and exaggeration in the account that was given of them; but I ſcarce think there could have been ſuch fanciful and exaggerated accounts without ſome foundation: and I muſt ſay, that one of the moſt marvellous of thoſe adventures, ſomething like the confuſion of King Agramant's Camp, or the battle royal in Don Quixote's enchanted inn, was deſcribed to me minutely, in the houſe, and in the preſence of a moſt reſpectable Fellow of that Royal College, who did not diſpute the accuracy of any part of the deſcription, and contented himſelf with declaring, very dryly, that he had been long a Member of it, and yet had never given or received one blow at any of its meetings. But that this was not the caſe univerſally with all its Members, was perfectly well known. I remember to have heard of one memorable ſkirmiſh, *parole* ſwimming, which afforded much amuſement to the ſcoffers. I remember to have heard, from an eye-witneſs, a minute account of a by-battle, at an accidental meeting in a private houſe, between two Fellows of the College, one of whom, having caught a Tartar, was pommelled in a very maſterly ſtyle. I have heard, from equally good authority, that at the ſupper given to the Royal College by the preſent worthy Preſident when he was admitted a Fellow of it, which muſt have been near twenty years ago, ſome of the Honourable Members were at blows before the table-cloth was removed; which was thought ſomewhat extraordinary. As to the number of ſlaps on the face, kicks on the breech, broken heads, black eyes, bloody noſes, pegs on the ſtomach, croſs buttocks, and chucks under the chin, which were given and received on that or any other of their grand field days, I never could obtain particular information: but no doubt it muſt have been very conſiderable. It is much to be lamented,

lamented, that no exact record of their practice in that reſpect was ever kept, as was very properly done of the practice of the volunteer companies of artillery on their grand days of exerciſe. Such a record, faithfully kept, would have been moſt edifying and inſtructive reading; eſpecially to their ſucceſſors, even to time's end. *Majorum gloria poſteris lumen eſt.* And certainly it would have been very delightful reading to all literate perſons, even though not diſpoſed nor required to follow the illuſtrious example. Either Fielding, or the divine Plato, who was himſelf a bruiſer, or ſome other equally great Philoſopher, has juſtly obſerved, that ſuch things are far pleaſanter to read of than to feel. I know that the late Dr John Hope was prevailed on to become a Member of one of their clubs; and that he ſoon found it too hot for him. I know that Dr Hope was ſo ſhocked and diſguſted with their mode of wrangling in the conſultation-room of the Infirmary, that he came to a right underſtanding with the Surgeon's clerk, and from him got intelligence whenever there was to be a conſultation, and took care to be out of the way in due time. But as a complete ſpecimen of the ſpirit which prevailed among them, even in the conſulting room of the Infirmary, it is ſufficient to mention one fact, which certainly will not be diſputed, as it muſt ſtill be freſh in the memory of many eye-witneſſes. In the courſe of one of their altercations, one of them behaved in ſuch a manner, that another, provoked at his inſufferable inſolence, ſeized him by the throat, and put him in the fire: I mean his better end, his nobler part, his ſeat of honour; for the grate was not large enough to receive his whole perſon. So the offender got off, *minus* one pair of breeches, and perhaps ſome portion of leather, which it may be preſumed would grow again. According to my information, there was not one Member of the College, unleſs perhaps the patient himſelf, who did not highly approve of that vigorous application of the actual cautery to his tail;

tail; or rather of his tail to the actual cautery. That kind of practice, though somewhat uncommon now-a-days, is fully justified by our best established medical axioms; one of which is expressed by Boerhaave in the following words, *In maximis malis semel et cito tentanda summa remedia.* Another of them is the well-known aphorism of Hippocrates, *Quæcunque non sanant medicamenta, ea ferrum sanat; quæ ferrum non sanat, ea ignis sanat; quæ ignis non sanat, ea incurabilia putare oportet.* 8. 6.

It is unnecessary to produce any more proofs and examples of that rancorous and inveterate warfare which prevailed in the Royal College of Surgeons, even within the walls of this Hospital, between sixteen and seven and twenty years ago. The authenticity of the examples given, will not, I presume, be disputed either by Mr John Bell or by any of his Clients, who probably will be more inclined to exult in them; and at least are well entitled to say, that they have no more to do with those disgraceful brawls, than with the biting and kicking among the unclean beasts in Noah's Ark; as all these things passed before their time.

It is a more nice and difficult matter, to give proper examples and proofs of the rancorous spirit of party that has prevailed among them in the second period; that is, from the time that Mr John Bell became a member of the College, till summer 1800, when my unlucky Memorial came forth: for not only any general account that I might give of it, but every particular instance that I could mention, however accurately stated, and however well authenticated to me, might be made the subject of endless dispute and altercation; and would even involve, what I should be sorry to see involved in this discussion, the personal and professional character, that is, the fame and fortune, of many individuals among them. This consideration has such weight with me, that, rather than run the risk of doing so great an evil, I believe I should have contented myself with the general reference in my former

Memorial, to the works of the formidable Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſquire.

But luckily I am poſſeſſed of a moſt precious document, which was in my hands at the time I was writing my former Memorial, and which at that time I ſuppreſſed, from conſiderations of delicacy; which Mr John Bell and his clients have had the goodneſs completely to remove. The document to which I allude is ſo complete and admirable, and ſo well ſuited for my purpoſe, that it looks as if it had been expreſsly made for it. It is in print, and has been ſo for about four years and a half; that is, for more than two years before my Memorial appeared: it was diſtributed among all the members of the College of Surgeons, and muſt have been read and well known by all of them, and by many hundreds of others; it is anonymous, and the name of no individual of their College is mentioned in it; it does not even appear, from a peruſal of it, what particular tranſaction among them gave occaſion to ſuch a bitter Philippick; it is written with a degree of fire and eloquence, little, if at all, inferior to that of ſome of the writings of Jonathan Dawplucker himſelf; though ſubſcribed only A FELLOW MEMBER, it is not on this account the leſs authentic, for the author of it is better known even than Jonathan Dawplucker. I am not entitled to mention his name; but the Managers and the public may be aſſured, that I ſhould never offer ſuch an indignity to Mr John Bell and his Clients, as to quote in oppoſition to their ſtrong inſinuations, even againſt my own veracity, the writings of an obſcure or contemptible author. It is a vulgar but a very juſt obſervation, that compariſons are odious; elſe I ſhould certainly attempt to draw ſome kind of compariſon or parallel, in the manner of Plutarch, between this very eloquent and indignant fellow member, and Mr John Bell, and Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſquire.

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It is proper however to mention, that the Fellow Member is highly reſpected and eſteemed for his talents, his veracity, and his probity: I mean that he is ſo by one party in the Royal College; the other party, no doubt, which happened to be the majority when his letter was written, would be very glad to ſee his ſkeleton. This of courſe he would take for granted, when he was writing and printing his letter. Yet it muſt not be thought that his letter expreſſes the ſentiments of only one individual of their number; for there is ample evidence, both poſitive and negative, that other fellow members approved of his ſentiments, and his publication of them. In the firſt place, negatively; he was not put in a ſtrait waiſtcoat on account of his printed letter; nor was he proſecuted for ſcandal and defamation on account of the many atrocious charges of infamous conduct which he brought againſt his brethren; he was not kicked down ſtairs, or thrown out at the window, for what he had printed: he was not even ſent to Coventry, as it is called, by any reſolution of his brethren not to ſpeak to him. Theſe negative conſiderations, in the judgment of every candid perſon, muſt imply, that there was much truth in what he had ſaid. But, in addition to them, we have the poſitive circumſtances, that he has been highly eſteemed and reſpected by many of his brethren, indeed by one whole party of them, who have given him repeatedly the moſt ample, public, and honourable teſtimonials of their favourable ſentiments. I ſcarce think Mr John Bell himſelf has much more to boaſt of in that reſpect than the nameleſs Fellow Member.

One glaring inconſiſtency and contradiction between his letter and Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, cannot fail to ſtrike even the moſt careleſs reader: for while the latter repreſents his brethren, individually and collectively, as every thing that is great and good in their own profeſſion, and in human nature, the former repreſents them as every thing that is vile, deteſtable, and infamous.

Such contradictions cannot be reconciled; but, in the preſent inſtance, I believe, they may be accounted for. The Fellow Member, in his printed letter, expreſſed his genuine indignant ſentiments, without reſtraint, reſerve, or diſguiſe: whereas Mr John Bell, acting in the character of an Advocate, was obliged to expreſs thoſe ſentiments, however repugnant to his own, which might ſerve the purpoſe of his clients. I have a ſtrong ſuſpicion, that Mr John Bell's ſentiments, with reſpect to his brethren, are not eſſentially different from thoſe expreſſed by the Fellow Member: and it is certain at leaſt, that neither the publication of the Fellow Member's Letter, nor that of Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, has produced any perceptible coolneſs in thoſe warm ſentiments of eſteem, admiration, and affection which they always have teſtified for one another. If there be any points on which Mr John Bell thinks the Fellow Member has either ſaid the things which are not, or done any injuſtice to his brethren, it will be eaſy for him to point them out, in a manner the moſt delicate, and beſt ſuited to their long and tender friendſhip. This I hope he will have the goodneſs to do, as it will give unſpeakable comfort to all concerned, and to no body more than to myſelf.

As the indignant Fellow Member's private Letter, which, for the ſake of greater privacy, was printed, diſtributed, and handed about all over the town, is not only completely adapted to my purpoſe on the preſent occaſion, but is really a ſplendid and valuable production of ſuperior genius, and now become very ſcarce; I am ſure it will be very gratifying to the Royal College of Surgeons, to the Managers of the Infirmary, and to the public in general, to ſee it reprinted *verbatim* in this Memorial. For this good purpoſe, I have put into the hands of Meſſ. Murray and Cochrane a fair clean copy of it, with the moſt pointed directions to reprint it faithfully: ſo, if there be any deviation from the original, they, not I, muſt anſwer for it: and if the indignant Fellow Member finds

finds any ſuch error in it, were it but the omitting or miſplacing of a ſingle point of admiration, he has my hearty conſent to ſeize the ſaid Meſſ. Murray and Cochrane, with their compoſitors and preſſmen, and their Devil to boot, and put them all to the *peine forte et dure* in their own printing preſs, *in terrorem*, and for the benefit of all future printers. The only liberty that I have preſumed to take with that moſt precious and original document, is the affixing of a few arithmetical numbers to the margin of it, for the ſake of preciſe and eaſy reference to certain luminous paſſages, which I wiſh to be conſidered in their full relation with the context, rather than to be exhibited and criticiſed in the form of detached quotations or extracts.

A PRIVATE LETTER, *addreſſed to the* GENTLEMEN *of the* ROYAL COLLEGE *of* SURGEONS, *by a* FELLOW MEMBER. *Edinburgh, July* 9. 1798.

The requeſt, in anſwer to which the following ſhort note was written, is one of the many motives for calling the attention of the Members of the Royal College of Surgeons to the preſent condition of that Society, the Elections, Offices, Buſineſs, and Duties of it.

SIR,

HAVING firſt received a letter from you, requeſting my vote to make you Preſident of the Royal College of Surgeons, you afterwards, in the ſtreets, forced me into a converſation, which was, to ſay the leaſt of it, unneceſſary. On my part, that converſation conſiſted chiefly of one queſtion, viz. Whether you yourſelf had not promiſed to vote for Mr. ——? You ſaid you had; and your reſolution

reſolution of keeping your word gives me ſuch a ſingular opinion of your honour and good ſenſe, that I cannot but vote along with you.—I am, Your moſt obedient ſervant,

SIR,

THE conſtitution of the Royal College of Surgeons gives to every Member high privileges in ſpeaking his ſentiments among his fellow Members; but this is a dead law. The buſineſs is uſually ſo formed by the official Members, that no man feels any peculiar call to do his duty; and his opinion degenerates into a ſilent vote, or unavailing proteſt. He is not encouraged to ſpeak his opinions; he is indifferent about buſineſs; which can do no honour nor ſervice to the Society;—its concerns roll on in one undiſtinguiſhed rotine; many Gentlemen have not condeſcended to appear at its meetings for years; and now, to the utter ſhame and diſgrace of the College, no one public duty occupies their thoughts, till that
(1) ſeaſon returns in which ſome ſingle Member is to puſh his way into the Council Chamber, for purpoſes which it were beſt, even among ourſelves, to leave unexplained.

When a Member of the College feels theſe things as he ſhould do, it is his privilege, and his bounden duty, to ſpeak his ſentiments in that form in which he thinks they will be moſt effectual; but he ſhould endeavour to do it with tenderneſs towards others, and under that reſtraint which becomes an individual Member, addreſſing himſelf to a public body, and to the Members of a public body. The perſon who now addreſſes you, feels that he acts honeſtly; proteſts himſelf purged of malice, free and honourable in his motives; with no little-minded private reſentment lurking about him; but with an honeſt and growing indignation
(2) at a public abuſe which has been increaſing upon us for years, and now knows no bounds.

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It is the fate of every public body to ſtruggle, firſt for exiſtence, then for privileges, for honours, laſt of all, when in the end, it falls, like the natural body, into ſlow decay. Our College has been much honoured, and often;—it has had large privileges, renewed from time to time;—it was once a learned body, and publiſhed thoſe eſſays which have been ſo much admired abroad;—it was then ſtruggling for the higheſt privileges, and obtained them, and was elected into a Royal College;—but at the preſent time, though it has thoſe privileges entire within it, like the ſpirit of life, yet it hardly lives, but merely exiſts. (3)

A long narration of this would ill ſuit the preſent purpoſe. The appeal is to thoſe who, being integral parts of this general body, feel, or need to feel, all the meanneſs of their ſituation: and, un- (4)
gracious as the taſk may be, I wiſh to prove to you, and all my fellow Members, how ſhamefully low this College has fallen; for (5)
this evil, if fully and generally felt, could not be long endured.

We feel nothing intereſting or honourable in the buſineſs of this College, in the character which it confers on its Members, in the privileges which they enjoy, or in the uſe which is made of thoſe privileges. To be a Member of ſo old an inſtitution, ſo highly chartered—ſo reſpectable by its privileges, ſhould be an honour; but it is ſo fallen in reputation, that, bating the right of practiſing (6)
in this city, there is no one privilege which a ſenſible man would value. The money, time, and ſervices, by which thoſe privileges (7)
are procured, are a mere ſquandering of the beſt years of life.

This College, to which we belong, would very ill bear to be compared with the Great Schools of other Countries. Its name is not known abroad; or, if it is ſo, it is only by being confounded with the Univerſity; for what ſtranger could think that it were not a literary body, as our profeſſion is a learned one. Its examinings, and its five guinea diplomas, are matter of trivial (8)
form: as official paſſports, they have but limited effect. They

have

have no currency—no reſpectability;—they are of no authority nor value;—they are acceſſible to all thoſe who cannot procure
(9) degrees, and are then their only refuge to ſatisfy their friends, like the parchments of private ſocieties. ——Who cares for our diploma?—

The buſineſs of the College cannot intereſt a rational man, who is entering into life with ſerious thoughts. Its laws relate to fines and meetings—the diſtributing of worthleſs diplomas—the exami-
(10) ning of the moſt ignorant young men, of whom no regular qualifications are required;—to the election of a Deacon, who goes to the Town Council but to be neglected; who, if he were truly choſen for his proper office, of Preſiding over a Royal College, over a ſociety of men bred up to ſcience, and thinking of their profeſſion alone, would feel himſelf but little connected with the Town Council, and not at all with politics; would go there ſeldom; and would be accordingly honoured. The buſineſs of the College is
(11) not paſſively deſpiſed, it is deteſted;—the place is forſaken;—its buſineſs is abandoned to thoſe few who need to hunt for ſome little office, or who have to run backwards and forwards, at the call of the whipper-in, and yelp in order to turn the game.—Who beſides minds the buſineſs to this Royal College?—Is this a fit or decent thing for men who belong to a ſerious profeſſion, and a learned one?

The offices of the College of Surgeons are ſuch as bring no honour. They are conſidered only as the means of procuring other offices out of the profeſſion—leſs honourable, but gainful; and yet it is ſtrange that ſuch mean offices ſhould be ſought after in this way:—for theſe offices muſt be filled up; without theſe ſneaking methods, each office muſt be given to ſome one; and it is only the intenſe deſire to procure them that hurries us into needleſs
(12) baſeneſs. But yet this is the pitiful motive for which an office, that of Preſident of the College of Surgeons, which ſhould be honourable,

nourable, has been long disgraced; and now, more than ever. Did no man propose himself for this office but with manly and respectful notions of what the College of Surgeons should be, and with a due sense of the value of his fellow Members, and of the dignity of the station to which he aspired. Those high thoughts would make him worthy of the honour. But are those, indeed, the motives? It were cruel to say of any individual that he did not solicit the office with such honourable intentions, or were not fit for its duties;—but if the Members of the Royal College of Surgeons had that respect for themselves, and for each other, which they should have, no one would dare to offer himself who were not, in some degree, worthy. It were surely requiring no hard thing of every right minded man, that, laying his hand on his heart, he should say, I believe the man for whom I vote to be worthy of this office;—I do not vote for him in consideration of his private interests, or peculiar situation;—I support him with no other thought than that he is to busy himself in the interest and honour of this College, and in that alone. Do we now acknowledge that this would be honourable, strictly honourable? and yet it is not done!!!

Once we had a College, and Presidents—and business, interesting to every Member. Our College was associated with physicians, for the purpose of publishing books of Science. Then character was equally divided in this commonwealth of knowledge, and the name of Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and especially the title of President, was honourable abroad; and, what is more difficult, more interesting, was respected at home.—But now that collection of observation, which once was a chief business of the College, is neglected;—and though this work of our forefathers has been infinitely approved of—which it is a lasting benefit to our profession, and an honour to the College to which we belong, is a reproach to us.——Do our present Members think

ſo meanly of themſelves?—or are they inſenſible to ſuch duties, and to ſuch honours?

There is no public buſineſs, nor any motive for aſſembling in the Hall. There is no private harmony—no means of cultivating
(13) a good underſtanding one with another; but we feel as if ſome ſpirit were working among us to divide us into abſurd parties, without apology or motive, or with ſuch motives only as a ſenſible man would bluſh to own.

There was indeed a time when every ſocial meeting, was ac-
(14) companied with thoſe loathſome exceſſes which could not long have been endured, which are, in our profeſſion, particularly diſgraceful. But thoſe diſorders had abſolutely ceaſed, when they
(15) were made an awkward pretence for aboliſhing every public meeting;—yet thoſe who propoſed that ſuch ſocial meetings ſhould be diſſolved, were by no means remarkable for their chaſteneſs of conduct, nor the moſt backward at thoſe ſeaſons of revelry and riot; nor the moſt earneſt for moral reform. The true reaſon lies
(16) much deeper than this. Thoſe ſhameful exceſſes had well nigh ceaſed. The College meetings were ſubſiding into a more gentleman-like form; points of profeſſional knowledge were aſſuming the place of political cabals. Young men were daily admitted;—it ſeemed poſſible that the Society might change its complexion altogether, and reform from other follies than the pardonable levities of any occaſional debauch;—it looked as if the Members were amalgamating and running together into ſome new ſhape. The general Society began to be weary of thoſe politics, and of that eternal irritation, which was profitable to a few only. It was found that votes and promiſes could be more eaſily bargained for—bartered—and interchanged in ſtreets and corners, than in general meetings;—and it was plainly perceived, that, ſhould the College of Surgeons become one united and reſpectable body; ſhould it become a Society of induſtrious men, eſpecially of young men;

and,

and, moſt of all, of young men aſpiring to any character of knowledge in their profeſſion, the College would put away all this idle buſineſs ;—it could no longer endure thoſe trifles which had hitherto been its ſole and conſtant occupations ;—it would no longer be ſteared through all the wilds of politics, by a Deacon and his Council. The concluſion was obvious, and much to be feared. It was thought eaſier to pick up the ſcattered particles than to move the congregated maſs ; and, for this worthy cauſe, the College was ſcattered like chaff;—all means of diſunion were provided ;—all (17) attempts at reunion were obſerved with a very jealous eye ; and the ſucceſſive propoſals of eſtabliſhing a uſeful and improving Society out of thoſe among the younger Members who wiſhed to be uſefully and honeſtly employed, has been ſo managed in the Deacon's Council as to ſhow plainly that politics and ſcience have no natural connection.

I make it my duty to ſpeak thus plainly my ſenſe of what I have ſeen, and of the tendency of it ; for this ſyſtem has grown into ſuch a flagrant enormity, that now the College of Surgeons (18) has degenerated into a ſet of politicians, not of the moſt exalted rank ; and every ſucceeding abuſe has its particular end, and every movement explains what is deſigned. I think almoſt a man might forſake his profeſſion, and ſtill retain influence enough to ſtruggle againſt a whole ſet of young men zealous and earneſt to do well ! ! !

No one among us can be ignorant from what motives it is that men have ſought to be placed in the chair of the Royal College of Surgeons. Their abilities to fulfil an honourable charge ;—their deſire to acquit themſelves well ;—their reſpectability in their profeſſion ;—their long ſtanding, or repute, never enter into their own minds ;—no anxieties of this kind trouble the electors or the elected ; it is to procure an office that they are elected ; and, when they are elected, their object is almoſt enſured. For thoſe who

need or deſire ſuch appointments, he muſt be an ill hearted man who does not feel ſome concern and ſympathy, according to his degree of connection and intimacy; but he ſhould feel himſelf infinitely degraded in ſhowing his friendſhip in this way. Let us choke up this thoroughfare to politics through ſacred ground; for while objects ſo tempting are in view, men will not be reſtrained. It is eaſy to perceive how the beſt and moſt induſtrious of our profeſſion may be ſeduced by this rage like gaming, which abſorbs all other thought, and diſdains no means of acquiring its object. Often, in the entering into the world, a young perſon is like one "ſtruggling for life among the waters," and feels thoſe labours and hardſhips, thoſe diſappointments and neceſſities, which drive a thinking man almoſt to deſpair; without blame he is eaſily ſeduced from his profeſſion; he is anxious to make proviſion for thoſe depending on him the eaſieſt and ſhorteſt way, and is induced to go after expectations far different from thoſe which animated him in the firſt proud outſet of life, when he thought he had made choice of that profeſſion in which he could delight to work his way to a reſpectable ſtation with pleaſant labour.

The man who does this may be pitied, but cannot be blamed. Should a private individual ſee the companion of his early days abandon his profeſſion, and break all thoſe expectations which made a part, as it were, of their mutual friendſhip, and make himſelf wretchedly dependent on chances which no man can controul, and the ſlave of others, what would he feel? Could he approve of this? Would he not be ſenſible that his friend was loſt to himſelf and to the world? And if a private friend ſhould thus lament a man of abilities in his profeſſion abandoning himſelf to ſuch objects, ſhould a College encourage this temper, or tempt its Members by bribes, or ſuffer them to abandon or neglect their profeſſion, which it is the very eſſence of the inſtitution to ſupport? When once ſuch motives and objects generally prevail,

prevail, and are conſidered as the direct or indirect motive of every connection among our fellow Members, they abſorb every honeſt or induſtrious thought in the vortex of jealous and uneaſy paſſions; and the buſineſs of the College, its offices, its public meetings, its annual elections, are all turned to this one point. A man ſhall pretend to ſolicit the chair of the Royal College of Surgeons from the moſt honourable motives—ſhall cheat his fellow Members with promiſes of reform—and yet ſhall neglect all thoſe meaſures which might put ſcience in motion, enſure improvement, raiſe the Society from its preſent meanneſs, and give to each individual Member his ſhare of reputation—ſhall think of nothing but how to ſtick up, in the place which he muſt appear to leave, an image which will move when he draws the ſtrings—of the pretty puppet!

Thus it is that our diſhonour is perpetuated; that the Preſident of the Royal College, and, by implication, every Member of it, becomes a ſuitor for ſome deſpicable poſt, and even in the Town Council is deſpiſed, but ſtill muſt be gratified—becauſe he has been made Convener—has got the command of his fellow Deacons—has drunk them into good humour with himſelf, and ill humour with the Town Council—has procured another ſet of votes—has eſtabliſhed a ſecond cabal; and, in ſhort, has inoculated (19) another public body with that venomous infection which he has carried out of his own. To be plain, the College of Surgeons *does gamble with its votes for places and penſions ſuch as they are.* Their Preſident is as a conſul to negotiate the trade for himſelf or his (20) friends, and Deacon after Deacon labours in the filthy craft without ſhame.

But, Sir, the open diſgrace is nothing, compared with the in- (21) ward unhappineſs which prevails among us.—There is no chance of harmony or friendſhip among a public body, unleſs they are open, generous, and honeſt with each other, employed about ſome public

public and reſponſible buſineſs, and with no thoughts which they may not eaſily diſcloſe.—But, with us, no one knows what another is doing.—He looks in another's face, and ſees that he has been tampered with; he ſees counſels and whiſperings in ſtairs and paſſages;—each is vexed with ſolicitations—jealouſies foreign to his own honeſt thoughts are cunningly infuſed into his mind; he is irritated and ſtirred up againſt ſome particular perſon.—He
(22) is his enemy before he knows.—Other reaſons are acknowledged for liking or diſliking, than thoſe which ariſe from the mere intercourſe of gentlemen one with another.

(23) Is not this the pure ſpirit of party?—Has not the deſigning ſecrecy of theſe cabals an ill influence on the minds and manners of men?—Let me aſk you, Sir, as a Member of this College, Has
(24) a man leave to be neutral?—Has he leave to indulge the natural bent of his diſpoſition?—Does he not ſee every moment men divided from him, almoſt without a motive, with whom he had expected to live in conſtant and uſeful friendſhip?—It has really come to paſs, as Voltaire ſays, "That one muſt either be "hammer or anvil."—He has no choice.—This ſpirit of party interrupts all friendſhip, but I hope not permanently—is deadly
(25) to every principle of honour.—Accuſtomed to dabbling in the Town Council for poſts, our Members learn to call it politics; and, having profeſſed themſelves politicians, they aſſume, along with the title, all the privileges of politicians—reſtleſſneſs—neglect of their proper duties,—enmity without a cauſe, and breach of faith without a motive;—till, at laſt, every thing diſhoneſt
(26) ceaſes to be diſhonourable;—and *divide and govern* is no doubt among the maxims which ſome aſſume as part of this broad charter, which confers on our little doings the title, the pri-
(27) vileges, and apologies, and all the dignified villanies of high politics.—One ſolicits a vote to eſtabliſh a friend in the Preſident's chair—that that friend may aſſiſt another friend to make

votes

votes in the Town Council—to procure a place which he has ſolicited for five years—For they are building a houſe of correction—and it will be ſoon built—and perhaps people will be put into it—and perhaps it will need a Surgeon,—and probably the Deacon of the year will be made Surgeon,—and very likely the ſalary that ſhall be aſſigned him will bear ſome ſort of proportion to the ſteadineſs of his influence; and perhaps though he is elected this year, and has got the place, if he be not Deacon next year he may have no ſalary at all, and ſo get the diſh which Grumio propoſes to his termagant miſtreſs, "Now, good ſweet "lady, what would you think of the muſtard without the meat." This is the prieſt all ſhaven and ſhorn,—that loved the maiden all forlorn,—that *MILKED the COW with* the *CROOKED HORN*,—that toſſed the dog,—that worried the cat,—that killed the rat,—that eat the malt,—that lay in the houſe that *JACK BUILT*.————

Theſe are the purpoſes, Sir, for which you and I and all of us are kept in perpetual torment, till ſome among us have as fairly forgotten what a vote or a promiſe means, as they have the ten com- (28)
mandments. Every thing diſhoneſt ceaſes to be diſhonourable, and all becauſe it is called politics, till at laſt a perſon, either from making too nice diſtinctions, or too coarſe diſtinctions, or from making no diſtinctions at all, promiſes a gentleman his vote to make him Preſident of the College of Surgeons, as if he wiſhed him ſucceſs, and then propoſes himſelf as a candidate, as if again he were ſo ABSURD as to wiſh himſelf ſucceſs, and then he promiſes to keep his word and his HONOUR, as if he meant that both ſhould ſucceed, and ſo he pulls with the left hand, and draws with the right. "Then be theſe juggling friends no more believed that paulter "with us in a double ſenſe; that keep the word of promiſe to our "ear, and break it to our hope.—I'LL NOT FIGHT WITH THEE."

But there is perhaps another intereſt working againſt all improvement, and it is the fancied ſuperiority of certain gentlemen,

who

who yet are prudent enough to ſecure that ſuperiority by other means than a fair pre-eminence in knowledge. They are fearful of every
(29) young man,—jealous of every approach,—their diſtinction would be infinitely leſſened if they were ſurrounded by young people whoſe individual eſſays might compoſe a reſpectable volume. This is not generous, perhaps, but it is ſurely true. It is not my own obſervations only, it was the obſervation of other ſenſible men who felt it ſorely. It has been ſaid, that there are men againſt whom
(30) you can commit no higher offence, than to ſhow any anxiety that your profeſſion ſhould be generally improved: The leaſt movement or tendency that way excites a jealouſy and reſiſtance, as if the ſtruggle were for life and being. If this College were but what it ſhould be, no one would dare to ſhow even a lukewarm temper towards ſo high an intereſt, or, if he ſhould dare to interrupt ſuch uſeful deſigns, would be branded with the name of traitor to that ſcience which he was ſworn to promote.

I would have the College of Surgeons look well to its reſpectability and good name, and let no individual Member ſay it is none of my concern.—We feel, indeed, little connection with this public body, becauſe we have no common intereſt in it—we have no ho-
(31) nour in being common Members of it; the inſtitution has been thoroughly degraded. But if it could be raiſed to a reſpectable ſtation among Colleges, or if it ſhould fall yet a little lower than we ſhould indeed feel, how much we are individually affected by its ſtate. Our profeſſion ſtands on the difficult ground of public opinion, and in a public body the conduct of Members is more obſerved than they are apt to believe, and it forms a part of their general character—ours is a public profeſſion and a buſy one, every man's way of purſuing his profeſſion is perfectly known, and that public which ſeems to think ſo little, and yet judges ſo truly, gives to every one his due reward.

It

It were well if the College of Surgeons, in place of ſtriving to de- (32)
baſe itſelf every day more and more, in place of buſying itſelf in behalf of a few, not the moſt reſpectable of its Members, in cabals and ſolicitations for petty offices, were to employ itſelf in matters which might make the preſent Members reſpectable; and in ſettling a ſyſtem of education in a Univerſity where every kind of education can be procured, ſuch as would enſure a ſucceſſion of valuable Members who might maintain the reſpectability of the College and the honour of a profeſſion which needs continually to be ſupported; for it ſtands upon the difficult ground of opinion, and by a very little miſconduct, all that makes it reſpectable, honourable, or uſeful, might go to wreck. We muſt be ſerious when ſerious matters are concerned.

You cannot be inſenſible of the ſtrong reaſons a Member has for putting his thoughts together in this haſty way; and you muſt have had ſome uneaſy feelings on that occaſion whether you have been buſied in conducting a matter which you have no reaſon to be proud of; or whether you are ſubmitting yourſelf, on the other hand, compoſedly and quietly to what you muſt conſider as no ſmall diſgrace; whatever your connections in politics or in friendſhip are, I hope and truſt you will feel for a moment the neceſſity of laying aſide all ſuch partial conſiderations, will come to the meetings of the College prepared with the honeſt feelings of an independent man, anxious for his profeſſion, ſenſible of the mean con- (33)
dition into which the Royal College of Surgeons has fallen, and ready to act a generous, open, and manly part in that College.

It is as a fellow Member that I addreſs you; and if the Society were what it ſhould be, that would be a title of ſome import, expreſſing ſome degree of eſteem and friendſhip—ſome fellowſhip in occupation and intention—ſome privileges would be annexed to that name, which at this time we cannot boaſt of, it ſhould at leaſt imply that I meant very ſincerely; and yet, when a private

Member addreſſes a public body, he cannot be without anxiety; nor reſolve upon ſo bold a meaſure, with urgent motives, and long delay. The very firſt ſtep he moves, he will feel all the delicacy of his ſituation; he will really feel himſelf performing a ſerious duty which nothing but a high ſenſe of its importance can enable him to fulfil. He cannot ſuppoſe his private thoughts to have much influence unleſs they have been anticipated by his fellow Members. He cannot ſuppoſe the name of any individual to have the ſmalleſt influence in enforcing thoſe ſentiments; fortunately the ſubject reſts leſs on authority than on common ſenſe and ſound judgment in the ordinary affairs of life; but in a caſe where ſome may chooſe to ſuppoſe themſelves offended, it is not fit that any man ſhould have leave to ſay, that by withholding his name, the writer of this letter means that it ſhould be concealed; it never ſhall be withheld on any urgent occaſion; and on an occaſion ſo full of improprieties on the ſide of thoſe whoſe conduct he condemns, he will be rather proud of any enmities he may entail upon himſelf from performing a duty ſo neceſſary, and but too long delayed; ſuch duties are more honourably diſcharged in any open and public manner, than in thoſe private converſations which are ſo liable to be miſrepreſented, and which cannot in our divided ſtate be always excluſively in the preſence of ſincere friends. If I ſhould have the happineſs to find that theſe ſentiments are in uniſon with thoſe of the more reſpectable and independent of my fellow Members, I ſhall come forward and call a meeting of the College, and propoſe ſuch laws as may perhaps render the whole College completely independent. Without this encouragement, it were preſumption for any individual to move. But whatever you,
(34) as an individual, may reſolve in the preſent diſorderly ſtate of our Society, I beſeech you to begin, before it be too late, to regard yourſelf more, and to think yourſelf more highly connected with a Society which you might help to re-eſtabliſh, whoſe re-eſtabliſh-

ment

ment would reflect honour on each of us,—which was once reſpectable;—which might be ſo eaſily reſtored;—whoſe privileges we have bought ſo dear, whoſe functions we ſhould not ſuffer to be (35)
thus diſgraced.

A FELLOW MEMBER.

From my printing *verbatim* ſo long a paper, it will be underſtood that I think it of the higheſt authority and importance. Indeed it ſeems to me abſolutely deciſive of ſome of thoſe points, which at preſent I wiſh to eſtabliſh. It muſt not however be thought that I take any part in thoſe diſputes to which it relates, or mean to expreſs or inſinuate any opinion favourable to the indignant Fellow Member and his friends, or unfavourable to his opponents, whom he has treated ſo ſeverely in his Philippic. I truſt that he and his friends are too generous, and too juſt, to expect from me ſo injudicious and ſo dangerous a compliment; for which it cannot be doubted, that his opponents would inſiſt on performing on me, in a grand ſtyle, the operation of bronchotomy; that is, in plain Engliſh, they would cut my throat from ear to ear; juſt as he and his friends would do, if I ſhould pay their opponents ſo raſh a compliment as to declare, or inſinuate, that I regarded that ineſtimable private letter as a ſeries of malevolent falſehoods from end to end.

To ſay the truth, I think a little ſcarification about the external fauces would be very properly beſtowed on me, if I were mad enough to offer any opinion of perſons and tranſactions, of which I neither know nor wiſh to know any thing. What I cannot, and will not do myſelf, it would be abſurd to expect or deſire the Managers, or any other perſon to do. Of what uſe then, it may be aſked, can that printed letter be in this diſcuſſion? I think it may ſerve a very noble uſe, if we conſider it logically; or, according to Mr John Bell's happy conceit, (Section 1. page 21.) take the Cyclops

hammer to it; though indeed this appears to me ſomewhat like taking a ſledge-hammer to break an egg.

Firſt then, for the good of the public, and the credit of the Fellow Member and of his friends and adherents, we have the following plain, undeniable dilemma.—Every propoſition, that is, every thing aſſerted, in the private letter, muſt be either true or falſe.

On this dilemma reſts an equally undeniable trilemma.

If all thoſe aſſertions are true, the perſons of whom ſuch things are truly ſaid muſt be a parcel of ſad dogs; very ſad dogs indeed.

If they are all falſe, thoſe who have aſſerted, or by their approbation have ſanctioned, ſuch infamous falſehoods, muſt be a parcel of ſad dogs; very ſad dogs indeed.

But ſome, for example one half, of thoſe aſſertions, may be true, and the others falſe: if ſo, then both thoſe perſons of whom ſuch things were truly ſaid, and thoſe perſons who have falſely ſaid ſuch things of their brethren, muſt be very ſad dogs; and their whole College muſt be a ſet of the verieſt miſcreants that ever were incorporated either by Royal or Diabolical charter.

This laſt concluſion, being the moſt unfavourable of the three, and moreover being notoriouſly falſe in point of fact, and contrary to the moſt certain perſonal knowledge of the Managers of the Infirmary, and of many hundreds of the moſt reſpectable inhabitants of this city, may be ſet aſide at once. It will then remain certain, that one or other of the two preceding concluſions muſt be true, namely, that one or other of the parties among the Surgeons muſt be a parcel of very ſad dogs; which was to be demonſtrated: for this is all that concerns me, or the Managers, on the preſent occaſion; and I preſume it will not be diſputed by any one Member of the Royal College of Surgeons. It clearly implies the neceſſity of ſelection among them for Hoſpital-duty, and the groſs impropriety of their numerous and promiſcuous conſultations.

tions. But if Mr John Bell or his Clients diſtruſt my demonſtration, they are heartily welcome to conſult my Brother Cyclops, the Profeſſor of Logic, and alſo, if they pleaſe, the Profeſſor of Mathematics, and learn whether they can find any flaw in it.

As to the point, of who is right or who is wrong in their diſputes, it is entirely their own buſineſs; and they may ſettle it at their leiſure, or let it alone, as they think beſt. Perhaps they may take a uſeful hint from a little domeſtic occurrence which happened in London a few years ago. There lived, and perhaps ſtill lives, in that gay city, a genteel and elegant couple, a perfect pattern of conjugal virtue and happineſs; bating only that the huſband was ſomewhat promiſcuous in his amours, and the lady rather too unguarded in the diſtribution of her favours. Of courſe, it came to paſs, once on a time, that the lady found her health conſiderably diſordered, and in ſo particular a manner, that ſhe was ſure her huſband muſt know it, and that his own could not be in a much better condition. Being a woman of ſenſe, and ſpirit, and addreſs, ſhe took an opportunity to remonſtrate with him, pretty ſharply, on the injury that he had done her. He, being a thoroughly well-bred man, as well as a moſt affectionate huſband, heard her out with the moſt polite and patient attention; and when ſhe had done, " My dear," ſaid he, " that there is a Pox in " the family is pretty plain; but as to how it came into it,—I be- " lieve we had better let that point reſt."

The general tenor of the private letter, from end to end, ſhows, much better than any particular extracts of it can do, the inveterate and increaſing rancour that prevailed in the Royal College of Surgeons; the intolerable height to which it had come; the total deſtruction of all private harmony among its members; and, in ſome meaſure, the nature and ſubjects of their diſputes: but, for the gratification of the curious, I have marked, by marginal numbers, a few paſſages, the moſt characteriſtic and expreſſive of thoſe things.

things. From the paſſages (29, 30.) it is plain, that profeſſional hatred and jealouſy had its own ſhare, as was to be expected, in exciting ſuch bitter animoſity. But from the paſſages (1, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27,32.) it is equally plain, that their profeſſional animoſity was further embittered by dirty politics, as they are called; that is, by ſordid malignant corporation-diſputes about loaves and fiſhes. It is impoſſible to read the paſſage (28) without feeling for the cruel ſituation of the indignant Fellow Member: it is horrible to think that a man of his pure diſintereſted benevolence; of his high ſenſe of honour and probity; of his warm zeal for the advancement of ſcience in general, and for the improvement of his own profeſſion in particular; and withal of ſuch exalted notions of the dignity of his profeſſion, and the glories of his Royal College, derived from ſo many charters, ſhould be reduced to the ſad neceſſity of herding with ſuch a parcel of fellows as he declares his brethren to be; a ſet of fellows, who had abſolutely forgotten the Ten Commandments; ſo completely and notoriouſly forgotten them, that he uſed that compariſon, as the beſt he could think of, to give ſome notion how completely they had forgotten what a vote or a promiſe was. Then to ſee ſo great and good a man attempting to reform ſuch a ſet of miſcreants, and to rouſe them to any thing great, or good, or honourable, muſt excite, in every perſon, admiration blended with pity; admiration for his glowing zeal, and pity for his hopeleſs undertaking; compared to which the labour of Hercules, in cleanſing the Augean ſtable, was but a morning's paſtime. This author's deſperate attempt is evidently of the ſame kind with that of calcining ice into gunpowder, or of extracting ſun-beams from cucumbers.

It will be eaſier, in the courſe of nature, to make a thouſand new men, than to mend even one of thoſe unpromiſing ſubjects that he had to do with.

Without

Without the help of profound logic, or any very laborious or minute diſcuſſion, they may almoſt gueſs what the public would think of their Royal College, on reading that private printed letter: or if not, they will underſtand it at once by conſidering a ſimilar caſe. Some fourſcore years ago all the wits and all the wiſe men of Dublin were poſed to underſtand how it came to paſs that a certain clergyman's nails were always black and dirty. Stella, Swift's good friend, explained it at once, by obſerving that it was with ſcratching himſelf.

The paſſages marked (14, 15, and 16.) deſerve peculiar attention, and require a very ample commentary; as when duly conſidered they afford the moſt convincing proof of that kind of manners and warfare, which, as I have already ſtated, prevailed in the Royal College before Mr John Bell was a member of it; and which, it now appears by the private letter, had not ceaſed in ſummer 1798; twelve good years after he was a member of the College, and only two years before my Memorial came forth. The indignant Fellow Member has indeed been very happy in the delicate general expreſſion, *loathſome exceſſes*, which he employs to denote that deteſtable practice of brawling. This expreſſion is the more delicate and dignified, that it is ambiguous. It may be underſtood to mean only the common phyſical effects of exceſſive drinking, on the human ſtomach; which Cicero, in his own coarſe ſtyle, has expreſſed in the well known words, *a tertia hora, bibebatur, ludebatur, vomebatur:* and more fully in another place, *aliquod Lapitharum aut Centaurorum convivium ferebatur: in quo nemo poteſt dicere, utrum iſte plus biberit, an vomuerit, an effuderit. Torquati rara gloria*, ſays Pliny, *non labaſſe ſermone, non levatum vomitione, non altera corporis parte, dum biberet; matutinas obiſſe vigilias, plurimum hauſiſſe uno potu*, &c. But indeed the ſentiments expreſſed by the indignant Fellow Member amply explain what kind of exceſſes he meant. Far from wondering that men exaſperated by ſuch ſentiments of one another, ſhould come

come to blows, as ſoon as they got drunk, or even ſooner ; the wonder is, that they did not eat one another on the ſpot, like King Duncan's horſes ; who ſeem indeed to have been very ſpirited beaſts.

The moſt extraordinary circumſtance in or about that private letter, or perhaps in all the diſputes that have prevailed in the Royal College, is, that a perſon knowing what the majority of his brethren was, ſhould wiſh to have their convivial, or as he calls them, *public* meetings continued. Any prudent man, of a peaceable diſpoſition, and above all a ſkilful Surgeon, who knows the extreme danger of a fractured ſkull, and the precarious ſucceſs of the operation of the trepan, I ſhould think, could no more wiſh to dine or ſup in ſuch company, than to partake of a banquet with a Royal College of Tygers ; where he could not fail to know, that, long before he was half ſeas over, his right-hand neighbour would probably take it into his head to eat him raw, as a man would eat an oyſter. I ſuſpect more was meant than has yet appeared or been avowed, by that unaccountable eagerneſs to continue or to renew thoſe convivial brawls, and that the majority of the Society had ſome prudential reaſons, connected with certain notions of perſonal ſafety, for ſo peremptorily putting an end to them.

It muſt be obſerved, that though the author of the private letter had raſhly ſaid, (15), that thoſe loathſome exceſſes had *abſolutely ceaſed*, yet in a few lines after, (16), he very properly corrects that little ſlip of his pen, and tells us only, that they had *well nigh ceaſed*. Such a correction of his own text, muſt give to every reader a high notion of his ſtrict accuracy and veracity. *Well nigh ceaſed*, ſeems to me to mean, *ſtill continued:* but if they had *abſolutely ceaſed*, ſuch a private letter, or even one ſentence *viva voce* from the author of it, would have been forty times more than enough to renew them with more inveteracy than ever.

It is impoſſible to read what he has ſaid, (15), without ſharing his indignation at his Brethren, for uſing thoſe loathſome exceſſes

as

as a *pretence* for putting an end to the convivial meetings, at which they occurred; for this was adding inſult to injury.

Every body knows, that by a *pretence* is meant, not only a falſe reaſon or argument, but one publicly declared, in order to conceal ſomething *worſe*, more diſgraceful, and leſs fit to be known or avowed: as for example, " Hold your tongue, Sir," ſaid a great orator, in an altercation with one of inferior genius, " don't we " all know that your wife, under *pretence* of keeping a bawdy-" houſe, is a receiver of ſtolen goods."

But I doubt whether the cutting off their convivial ſuppers was ſo great an injury to the Fellow Member and his Brethren as they ſuppoſed; or at leaſt whether it was meant as ſuch an injury. If the true purpoſe of it was not fully explained to them, no doubt they muſt have ſhared the indignation, the anguiſh, and the deſpair of Sancho Panza, the firſt day that he dined in public in his government of Barrataria, and found a Doctor at his elbow, who conjured away every good diſh that appeared on his table, and adviſed him to dine on a wafer and a ſlice of marmalade.

I have generally found that my patients, when I adviſe them to abridge their diet, look ſour at me; and many of them, I am ſure, have never forgiven me for urging that wholeſome advice.

I had not the honour to be of the conſultation which determined upon reforming the diet of the Royal College of Surgeons; nor do I know who aſſiſted at it: but I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that a certain pale-faced water-drinking gentleman, who ſhall be nameleſs, was at the bottom of it.

At any rate, I am ſure I ſhall not be ſuſpected either of falſehood or flattery, when I declare, that I think the reform was very neceſſary and judicious. No better phyſical means could be deviſed, to put an end to thoſe loathſome exceſſes, which had become ſuch an intolerable abomination.

It is but fair to ſuppoſe that they all knew well and believed the important Aphoriſms of Hippocrates on the ſubject of diet:

His qui in circuitibus exacerbantur (particularly about the times of annual Corporation and Borough Elections) *nihil dare oportet, neque cogere*, (that is, let there be no cramming of them), *ſed auferre de oppoſitionibus, ante judicationes.* 1. 19.;—*Si ex morbo cibum capiens quis non fiat validus, ſignificat quod corpus uberiore alimento utitur. Si vero cibum non capienti hoc contingat, noſſe oportet quod evacuatione opus habet.* 2. 8. *Quicunque morbi ex repletione fiunt, evacuatio ſanat.* 2. 22.; and above all, *Impura corpora quanto magis nutries tanto magis lædes.* 2. 10. Surely if ever there was a foul body in this world, full of the fouleſt humours, performing daily the fouleſt actions, and loaded with the fouleſt reproaches, it muſt have been the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, at the very time when the Author of the private letter was ſo enraged at the very needful and wholeſome abridging of their full diet.

Any of them, who were men of reading, might even be ſuppoſed to have known the philoſophical principles of that part of Dietetics, as explained in Prior's Alma.

The plaineſt man alive may tell ye,
Her ſeat of empire is the Belly:
From hence ſhe ſends out thoſe ſupplies,
Which make us either ſtout or wiſe:
The ſtrength of every other member
Is founded on your Belly-timber:
The qualms or raptures of your blood
Riſe in proportion to your food.
Your ſtomach makes your fabric roll,
Juſt as the bias rules the bowl.
That great Achilles might employ
The ſtrength deſign'd to ruin Troy,

He

He dined on lions marrow, ſpreaa
On toaſts of ammunition-bread:
But by his mother ſent away,
Amongſt the Thracian girls to play,
Effeminate he ſat and quiet:
Strange product of a cheeſe-cake diet.
Obſerve the various operations
Of food and drink in ſeveral nations.
Was ever Tartar fierce or cruel
Upon the ſtrength of water-gruel?
But who ſhall ſtand his rage and force,
If firſt he rides, then eats his horſe?
Sallads and eggs, and lighter fare,
Tune the Italian ſpark's guitar:
And if I take Dan Congreve right,
Pudding and beef make Britons fight.

But from the truly ſcientific accuracy with which that very needful and ſalutary change of regimen was conducted, particularly the well-judged diſtinction of allowing the Royal College its public breakfaſts, taking away only its carnivorous and Bacchanalian meals; it is plain to me, that the members of the conſultation had gone to the very fountainhead of all ſound doctrine concerning the diet of patients: I mean Pythagoras; whoſe original writings are unfortunately loſt; but, happily for mankind, the ſubſtance of them has been preſerved, and made immortal in the elegant poems of Ovid.

——————— Primuſque animalia menſis
Arcuit imponi: primus quoque talibus ora
Docta quidem ſolvit, ſed non et credita, verbis.
Parcite, mortales, dapibus temerare nefandis

Corpora. Sunt fruges, ſunt deducentia ramos
Pondere poma ſuo, tumidæque in vitibus uvæ:
Sunt herbæ dulces: ſunt quæ miteſcere flamma,
Mollirique queant. Nec vobis lacteus humor
Eripitur, nec mella thymi redolentia florem.
Prodiga divitias alimentaque mitia tellus
Suggerit; atque epulas ſine cæde et ſanguine præbet.
Carne feræ ſedant jejunia: nec tamen omnes;
Quippe equus, et pecudes, armentaque, gramine vivunt.
At quibus ingenium eſt immanſuetumque ferumque,
Armeniæ Tigres, iracundique Leones,
Cumque Lupis Urſi, dapibus cum ſanguine gaudent.

It is plain from the ſtrong general recommendation of vegetable aliment of all kinds, and above all, from the ſpecific mention of milk and honey, that Pythagoras had in view preciſely ſuch meals as our good Scotch breakfaſts. Never was the ſoundneſs of thoſe precepts better illuſtrated, or his philoſophy more triumphantly eſtabliſhed, than by the inſtantaneous and almoſt miraculous effect of his wholeſome vegetable diet on that foul carnivorous body for which it was ordered.

To the beſt of my knowledge and belief, and I have been at ſome pains to make the proper inquiries, not one ſlap on the face, or kick on the breech, has been adminiſtered, at any meeting of the Royal College of Surgeons, or even by any Member of that College to another, at an accidental meeting, or in conſultation, ſince that change of diet took place. Yet during this long period, now of more than four years, and indeed very ſoon after the College was put on that vegetable diet, very deciſive experiments were made, which afforded the ſtrongeſt poſſible proof of its wonderful efficacy.

On

On this point, the private letter, already printed verbatim, and amply diſcuſſed, may be conſidered as an *experimentum crucis*. The author of it flouriſhes, and long may he flouriſh as an example to his Brethren, in ſafety, honour, and proſperity.

But there was a time, when ſuch an author, before he could have uttered half a ſentence of ſuch a Philippic, would have been kicked, knocked down, and put head foremoſt into the fire. Then every body knows, that during the laſt two years there have been in the Royal College the keeneſt debates that ever were known, conducted with infinite ſpirit and eloquence, and expreſſed in " words far bitterer than wormwood, that would in Job or " Grizel ſtir mood." But all this clapperclawing, which, but a few years before, would have produced many blows and much bloodſhed, has terminated (I mean has produced, for no body knows when, how, or if ever it will terminate) in a few ſpirited lawſuits, which do harm to nobody, and much good to the gentlemen of the long robe. They have alſo afforded much, and I hope will afford much more amuſement to the public. I am ſo thoroughly convinced of the wholeſome influence of the Pythagorean diet on that Royal College, that, if the Members of it will faithfully adhere to the ſame tea and coffee regimen for only five and twenty or thirty years, I ſhall not be much afraid to drink tea with them: but in the mean time I ſhould think that rather imprudent; and I am ſure they will conſider me as a perſon *d'une aimable abſence*.

I know that another article of regimen, by many ſuppoſed to be of great importance, was duly attended to at their public Pythagorean breakfaſts; I mean the ſoothing influence of muſic; which I, for want of muſical ear, cannot judge of; but thoſe who can, and who have fairly tried its effects, conſider as a great article of the *regimen mentis quod medicorum eſt*. Muſic, ſays the Mourning Bride,

hath

hath charms to ſoothe a ſavage breaſt, to ſoften rocks, and bend a knotted oak.

Certain it is, that, with the help of a good band of muſic, their public breakfaſts, even in times of the greateſt animoſity, paſſed with all the gentleneſs and tranquillity of the annual meetings of the good people commonly called Quakers.

Quid mirum? ubi illis carminibus ſtupens
Demittit atras bellua centiceps
Aures, et intorti capillis
Eumenidum recreantur angues.

My curioſity was much excited to know how they contrived to obviate the well-known dangerous effects of the Bagpipe; which, to all true Scottiſh ears, has charms far more delightful than the harp of Orpheus, the lyre of Apollo, or the organ of St Cecilia.

But, beſides its peculiar merit as a muſical inſtrument, it is well known to be the moſt powerful military bellows that ever was invented; at leaſt it is ſo to all good Scotchmen: for if there be but one ſpark of military ardour, as generally there are a good many, in a Scottiſh breaſt, the drone of the bagpipe never fails to blow it up to a flame, forty times more fierce than ever raged in Carron furnace.

This, the Ghoſts of Bonaparte's invincible Legion, if they were produced in the Phantaſmagoria, will readily teſtify upon oath: as they cannot have forgotten, how ill they fared when oppoſed to the FORTY-SECOND. While we do juſtice to the valour of all the Britiſh troops on that memorable occaſion, we muſt not forget that much honour is due to the Bagpipe.

I ſhould have trembled for the honour of Pythagoras and his regimen, if the bagpipe had been introduced at the public breakfaſts of the Royal College: but moſt judiciouſly and happily it was ſuppreſſed;

preſſed; and no queſtions were aſked about it, by any Fellow of the Royal College.—But " Even in their aſhes live their wonted " fires." As I ſhould be very ſorry to lead any of them into an error, which might be fatal; I think it right to warn them that, within theſe two years, I heard a very reſpectable ſenior member of their College declare loudly in the open ſtreet, ſo that I am ſure he did not mean it to be a ſecret, that if it came to a *Pugnum* at any of their meetings, he was reſolved to ſeize by the legs the ſmalleſt Fellow of their College, and to uſe him as a club or a bludgeon to defend himſelf, and annoy his enemies. A moſt horrible expedient certainly: worſe than whipping them with ſcorpions: and I mention it here, that all whom it concerns may be on their guard; eſpecially thoſe who are under the middle ſize.—A *Pugnum*, I underſtand, was the technical word, in their Royal College, for what is called in England a *Battle Royal*, and in Ireland a *Row*. Whether it be derived from *Pugnus* a fiſt, or from *Pugna* a battle, *Grammatici certant, et adhuc ſub judice lis eſt.* I humbly conjecture that it comes from them both: and Cicero himſelf declares that he could not diſcover whether *Pugnus* was derived from *Pugna*, or *Pugna* from *Pugnus*.

It is wonderful to obſerve, that Mr John Bell, and the indignant Fellow Member, while they contradict one another flatly, on every point relating to the character, the conduct, and the profeſſional merits, of the individual members of the Royal College of Surgeons, do yet agree perfectly in expreſſing the higheſt eſteem, affection, and veneration, for the ſaid Royal College, as a body corporate. Though by the by, I doubt whether the Fellow Member knew what it was; and at leaſt Mr John Bell has given the moſt complete proof, even by his own definition of it, printed in Roman capitals in the 9th page of his ſecond ſection, that he knew no more

more about it than he does about the colleges in the planet Jupiter. " What is a College? as it relates to you and to your Infirmary? " A College is a conſtitutional barrier againſt the intruſion of ig- " norant, unworthy, or unprincipled men, into a profeſſion which " ſhould be ever ſacred; and this barrier is the ſafeguard of the " poor!"

When Don Quixote miſtook windmills for giants, and dirty inns for magnificent caſtles, he was thought inſane: yet ſurely his error was not greater than what we here find deliberately aſſerted and printed by Mr John Bell, and no leſs deliberately adopted and ſanctioned by his brethren.

Suppoſing *firſt*, for the ſake of argument, however abſurd or ridiculous it may be thought, that a College (of Surgeons) was *bona fide* meant for ſuch a barrier as he deſcribes; the *private letter*, whether it be a ſeries of the pureſt truths, or a ſtring of the moſt villanous lies, from end to end, affords forty times more than ſufficient evidence, that the pretended barrier in queſtion does not in the leaſt anſwer the good purpoſe for which it was intended; but on the contrary, brings together, to the great annoyance of the public, of the poor, and of this Hoſpital, a parcel of the moſt *ignorant*, *unworthy*, *unprincipled* men, that ever were aſſociated. But in truth a College is no more ſuch a metaphorical barrier as he pretends, than it is literally a paliſado, or a ditch, a redoubt, or a baſtion. A College, as I ſhould have thought every body muſt have known, is a ſociety or aſſemblage of individuals, legally eſtabliſhed and recogniſed; often incorporated by Royal Charter, on which account many of them have the title of Royal Colleges. Such Colleges, being conſtituted for very different purpoſes, muſt conſiſt of very different kinds of Members.

Thus there is a College of Cardinals in the Roman Catholic church; a College of Electors, and a College of Princes in Germany; Colleges of ſchool-boys, as at Eton and Weſtminſter; Colleges of learned

learned men, and of young men who are ſuppoſed to receive inſtruction from them, as at Oxford, Cambridge, and all other Univerſities; a College of old ſoldiers, as at Chelſea; a College of heralds; a College of clergymen, and old women, and old men, as in Sion College, London. All Colleges, legally conſtituted, have certain rights, powers, and privileges, which the members compoſing them individually have not, ſome of which privileges, rights, and powers may be highly honourable, as well as advantageous, to the individual members of ſuch Colleges. But there cannot be a greater miſtake than to ſuppoſe that the name of College, or the title of Royal College, ſhould confer on the individual members of any Society of Phyſicians or Surgeons, any honour, or dignity, any talents, knowledge, or virtues, which they did not poſſeſs before; or ſhould procure to them from the public any degree of eſtimation and confidence, which their own perſonal and profeſſional merits could not procure them. On the contrary, nothing but ſuch merits in the individual members of their Societies can make their titles of Royal Colleges reſpectable, or prevent them from becoming ridiculous.

The name of College had been ſo long and generally given to ſocieties of learned men, that when the Phyſicians, firſt of London, and afterwards of Edinburgh, were incorporated by charter, the name of College was given to their Society, rather than that of corporation or company; which had long been generally given to the various incorporated ſocieties of mechanics and tradeſmen. Some ſuch diſtinction and pre-eminence ſeems to have been well merited by the Phyſicians both of London and Edinburgh, at the time when they reſpectively obtained their Royal Charters: for all of them were men of learned and liberal education; and many of them were diſtinguiſhed by ſuperior learning and talents, and by their proficiency in various branches of ſcience, and equally reſpectable for their perſonal merit, their liberal manners, and their

profeſſional ſkill. Not being an antiquarian, I cannot ſpecify exactly the time at which the Phyſicians of England firſt became diſtinguiſhed in theſe reſpects; nor am I ſufficiently acquainted with all the circumſtances that contributed to give them that diſtinction, and to procure for their profeſſion in general, and for themſelves individually, unleſs they forfeited it by their own perſonal miſconduct, a degree of public eſtimation and reſpect, which neither Phyſicians nor Phyſic ever yet obtained in any other country in the world. But I have no doubt that it muſt have proceeded chiefly from the ſuperior merit of ſome individuals in England, who had embraced the profeſſion of phyſic; for no other human means could have produced ſuch an effect.

I believe, too, that honourable rank in public eſtimation, which they have long preſerved in England, was in a great meaſure obtained ſoon after the revival of letters.

From a circumſtance, trivial in itſelf, and which few people now-a-days think of attending to, it is plain, that the Phyſicians in England, who were men of learned education and liberal manners, were anxious to eſtabliſh a diſtinction between themſelves and the common herd of Medical Practitioners, who had neither the education of ſcholars, nor the ſentiments or manners of gentlemen.

At the time to which I allude, when mankind were but juſt beginning to emerge from the darkeſt and moſt barbarous ignorance, the ſuperiority conferred by a learned and liberal education muſt have been infinitely greater than at preſent, when knowledge is much more generally diffuſed; and when the moſt uſeful knowledge is made acceſſible even to thoſe who know no other language but their mother tongue. But in thoſe days, as in our own, the chief advantage of a liberal education, was not the ſuperior knowledge acquired by peruſing the " ample page, rich

" with

" with the ſpoils of time," but the great and permanent improvement of the mental faculties themſelves.

Adde quod ingenuas didiciſſe fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec ſinit eſſe feros.

The name aſſumed by thoſe learned and eminent men of our profeſſion, who firſt raiſed it to ſuch high eſtimation in England, is a proof of what they thought themſelves, and wiſhed to be thought by their countrymen. They called themſelves *Phyſicians*, which properly ſignifies men verſed in the knowledge of nature, and certainly bears no relation whatever to the trade of curing diſeaſes. They wiſhed to be diſtinguiſhed from the vulgar herd of thoſe who practiſed the ſame trade, and to be regarded as philoſophers and men of ſcience, who endeavoured to apply their knowledge to that good purpoſe. Their pretenſions ſeem to have been in ſome meaſure admitted; and at leaſt the appellation by which they choſe to be diſtinguiſhed, was ſoon univerſally adopted by their countrymen, though equally different from the old Engliſh name of men of their profeſſion, and from their appellation in every other language. In old Engliſh, before the revival of letters, and, I believe, both in the Saxon and the Celtic languages, we were called *Leeches:* a word which, in this, its original and proper ſenſe, has been quite obſolete for two or three hundred years; and all over England is underſtood to denote excluſively one of our humbleſt auxiliaries; the ugly black water-inſect, which we occaſionally employ as a bloodſucker.

I have no doubt that the lucky conceit, of ſubſtituting the term *Phyſician* for *Leech*, contributed much to raiſe our profeſſion in the eſtimation of the good people of England, juſt as the correſponding ſubſtitution of the word *Intereſt* for *Uſury*, very ſoon reconciled them to making profit by lending money; which,

while the ſame thing went by the odious name of uſury, was regarded as infamous, and criminal in the higheſt degree. Perhaps I refine in my ſpeculations, when I ſay, that a charter, eſtabliſhing a Royal College of Leeches, would at any time have been ridiculous: but I am ſure there is no refinement in ſaying, that if Henry VIII. had eſtabliſhed, inſtead of a company or corporation, a Royal College of Barber-Surgeons in London, ſuch a College, and every individual member of it, would have been laughed at: and that if Charles II. a year or two after conſtituting the Phyſicians of Edinburgh a Royal College, had graciouſly conferred the ſame honour on the Barber-Surgeons of this city, it would have been underſtood that that facetious Monarch meant it as a joke upon the Phyſicians.

I cannot help thinking, that there would have been ſomething abſurd and ridiculous, in conferring the title Royal College on a company of ſuch illiterate and illiberal men as Deacon Kennedy and his friends; whoſe memorial in 1737, and whoſe conduct towards the Managers of the Infirmary, have been amply diſcuſſed already. But I can ſee nothing abſurd or ridiculous in the title of Royal College, by our preſent Sovereign conferred firſt on the Company of Surgeons in Edinburgh, and afterwards on their brethren in London.

The reaſon of this difference in the ſentiments with which the ſame title, conferred on the ſame ſocieties, at different times, would have been regarded by the public, is very plain. The buſineſs of the Phyſician had become a learned and liberal profeſſion, while that of the Surgeon continued a low mechanical art, practiſed by illiterate and vulgar men: but gradually, though ſlowly, and chiefly in the courſe of the laſt century, the art of Surgery has been much improved, has been cultivated on ſcientific principles, and has been practiſed by many men of liberal education and manners. In conſequence of this, not only the profeſ-

ſion

ſion in general, but many individuals who practiſe it, have riſen greatly, and I hope ſhall long continue to riſe in public eſtimation; notwithſtanding the degrading effect of Deacon Kennedy's memorial, and of the indignant Fellow Member's private letter, and the ſtill more debaſing influence of Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me; approved and ſanctioned by ſo many of his brethren. Such compoſitions muſt infallibly decide the character and rank which the authors of them, and their approvers and abettors, are to hold in the world: and to them their works will ſtick, like a Leproſy, never to be cleanſed, till the Ethiopian learns to change his ſkin, and the leopard his ſpots.

While from theſe evident cauſes Surgery has riſen, Phyſic from the oppoſite, but no leſs evident cauſes, has ſunk in public eſtimation. Very many phyſicians, in this iſland, have had no advantages in point of learned and liberal education; and of courſe deſpiſe moſt heartily ſuch education, and take care to expreſs very freely their contempt of it. Still worſe, they frequently take occaſion to convince the world, by their writings, that they are profoundly ignorant of the firſt principles of ſcience, and even of grammar. I think it more than poſſible, that, in fifty or an hundred years, the buſineſs of a Phyſician will not be regarded, even in England, as either a learned or a liberal profeſſion. And in the mean time it is plain that there muſt be an end of all dreams of the ſuperior dignity of that branch of the profeſſion which is called Phyſic, in oppoſition to Surgery: for certainly no ſuch ſuperiority will be acknowledged by mankind; nor any dignity or diſtinction among Phyſicians and Surgeons, but what fairly and neceſſarily reſults from their own perſonal and profeſſional merits, and from the various ſituations and circumſtances in which they and their patients are placed. Thoſe worthy members of ſociety, who enjoy excellent health, but whoſe buſineſs leads them to go much in the way of cannon or even muſket-balls,

will

will certainly, and with good reaſon, conſider Surgeons as more uſeful, and therefore more important and dignified perſonages, than Phyſicians, whoſe ſervices they can generally diſpenſe with. While thoſe graver and wiſer perſonages, who have prudence enough to keep out of the way of ſuch balls, but not to keep out of the way of good eating and drinking, will ſoon learn due reſpect for our branch of the Faculty.

The firſt Phyſicians by Debauch were made;
Exceſs began, and Sloth ſuſtains the Trade:

Which, ſo begun, and ſo ſuſtained, I hold to be a ſurer fund than the Three per Cent. Conſols; and much more likely to ſurvive the ſhocks of revolutions, and all the horrors of foreign and of civil war.

But whenever Phyſicians or Surgeons ſeek to derive importance and honour, from being Fellows of a Royal College, inſtead of doing honour to that title by their own perſonal and profeſſional conduct, they will infallibly make themſelves and their title objects of contempt and deriſion.

A charter from his Majeſty may, in a moment, eſtabliſh in this city, a Royal College of Chimney-Sweepers: and if this were done, no doubt the good people of Edinburgh would find unſpeakable comfort, in having their chimneys ſwept, juſt as at preſent they do in getting their pulſes felt, and their legs cut off, by the Preſident and Fellows of a Royal College. Yet I do not believe our chimneys would be better ſwept than they have hitherto been; but there can be no doubt, that the Preſident and Fellows of that Sable College would entertain very high notions of their own perſonal and profeſſional dignity; and yet they would be, without one exception, the ſame vulgar, ignorant, dirty fellows, that they are at preſent.

With

With reſpect to the third and laſt period of chirurgical warfare in this city, extending from the time when my former Memorial was diſtributed, to the preſent hour; though during it the inveterate ſpirit of party among the Surgeons has not produced thoſe terrible exploſions, or loathſome exceſſes, as one of their own indignant Fellow Members is pleaſed to call them, which uſed frequently to occur in former times at their convivial and other meetings; thanks to the tea and coffee regimen to which the Royal College has been confined during the whole of this moſt trying period: we yet have ample proof, that the ſame noble ſpirit, under a different form, has continued to burn with unabated flame.

The public is already ſo well acquainted, both with the general tenor, and with many particular inſtances, of their party proceedings, that to enlarge on them here would be ſuperfluous, and even improper. Moſt of them have already appeared in print; and thoſe printed documents of them have been handed about with great aſſiduity and perſeverance. Firſt the public was regaled with obſervations, addreſſes, remarks, and plans for the better management of the chirurgical department of the Hoſpital. All that could be learned with certainty from theſe was, that the ſyſtem of the indiſcriminate attendance of the Surgeons on any plan of rotation, which one party contended for as right and proper in every reſpect, good for the Surgeons, and beneficial to the patients; was, by the other party, reprobated in the ſtrongeſt terms, as abſolutely irreconcileable with the good of the Hoſpital.

Both parties muſt have known perfectly the truth, and muſt often have been eye-witneſſes of the good or bad effects of that mode of attendance, which one of them wiſhed to preſerve, and the other to aboliſh. There could be no *miſtake*, therefore, on either

either ſide: the one party muſt have known perfectly that the other was ſaying the thing which was not: and I dare ſay, Hogarth himſelf would have been well pleaſed to have been raiſed from the dead, though but for half an hour, juſt to have made a few ſketches of the countenances of the hoſtile parties, as they ſurveyed one another in battle array.

The Managers of the Infirmary, and the public at large, cannot be embarraſſed by that groſs and irreconcileable contradiction of the two contending parties among the Surgeons. If all the arguments and illuſtrations that I have urged, both in my former Memorial and in this one; if the common ſenſe of mankind; if the conduct of the Managers of other Hoſpitals in the appointment of Phyſicians and Surgeons to them; if the conduct of the Managers of this Infirmary at its firſt inſtitution; if the conduct of the majority of the Surgeons at that time; and the very arguments which they uſed, with ſucceſs, to get that odious ſyſtem eſtabliſhed, which now, after ſixty years experience of its badneſs, is happily aboliſhed; be not ſufficient to ſhew on which ſide the truth is; nay, if all theſe conſiderations were to go for nothing in this diſcuſſion; ſtill the unanimous reſolution of the Surgeons themſelves, 9th Auguſt 1784, muſt ſhew, *indiſputably*, which of the two parties is entitled to credit on the preſent occaſion.

As it was manifeſtly impoſſible for them to make any impreſſion on one another by reaſon and argument, and as the *argumentum baculinum* was precluded by the wholeſome influence of their Pythagorean diet, no reſource was left them, but to go to Law. To Law they went accordingly, with a ſpirit and inveteracy worthy of their former renown.

Scarce was the firſt general lawſuit well begun, the one I mean between the College of Surgeons and the Managers of the Infirmary, when out of it there grew another lawſuit. Mr John Bell, having dreamed a dream, whether ſleeping or waking does not appear,

pear, nor is it of any conſequence, ſomething about ſome peculiar perſonal right that he, *qua* individual John Bell, had to attend, and conſult, and operate, in the Infirmary; of courſe went to law with the Managers, on the force of the ſaid dream. This indeed is not at all wonderful; for it ſeems to have been a lively and moſt delightful dream: pretty much the reverſe of Dido's dreary, diſmal, horrid dream, when ſhe was forſaken by that ungrateful vagabond Æneas.

——————" *Semperque relinqui*
Sola ſibi, ſemper longam incomitata videtur
Ire viam, et Tyrios deſerta quærere terra."

It is impoſſible not to lament, both for his own ſake and that of the public, that ſo enchanting a dream ſhould have paſſed away ſo ſoon, or indeed that it ſhould ever have paſſed away.

" How weary, ſtale, flat, and unprofitable," muſt ſeem to him all the uſes of this world, when compared with thoſe rapturous viſions of univerſal benevolence and love to mankind, of the boundleſs improvement of Surgery, and the endleſs glories of his profeſſion, " *quorum pars magna fuit.*" " Where ignorance is bliſs, 'tis folly to " be wiſe." If he was aſleep when he ſaw that glorious viſion, he ought never to have wakened: if he was awake, he ought never to have ſlept again; "All his functions ſuiting, with forms, to his " conceit, and all for nothing."

Yet it cannot be ſaid, that in the preſent inſtance, the " baſe- " leſs fabric of a viſion leaves not a wreck behind:" It has left " *monumentum ære perennius*," in the form of an excellent and moſt eloquent law-paper; written by Mr George Joſeph Bell, John's brother, and entitled, " Memorial for John Bell and Charles Bell, " Members of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, againſt " the Managers of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh." This lit-

tle Memorial, which, excluſive of its Appendix, contains only 78 quarto pages, is well worth " *multorum camelorum onus* " of ordinary law-papers. It certainly was not the fault of their Lawyer, that the two brothers did not win their cauſe triumphantly, with full coſts, and damages: for no body, I am ſure, can read that Memorial, without great admiration of the author's ingenuity and eloquence. But there was ſomething wanting to make it effectual, and ſomething which neither ingenuity nor eloquence can ſupply. When Archimedes undertook to move the world with his foot, he very wiſely made it a condition, that he ſhould have ſome place to ſtand upon. Now ſomething of this kind, like a fulcrum to a great lever, I conceive to be neceſſary to give the moſt ingenious law-paper, or the moſt eloquent pleading, any effect, in moving a court of juſtice, or ſhaking even ſuch a little world as that of Edinburgh. The delightful dream on which it was founded, was plainly inſufficient for this purpoſe.

That Memorial has alſo the merit of being the beſt expoſition, and moſt ample commentary, that can be deſired or conceived, on Mr John Bell's doctrine delivered in his Anſwer to me. As it made a part of the proceedings in the Supreme Court of Juſtice in this country, I preſume it would be improper, perhaps might be deemed a contempt of court, to offer any remarks on the arguments that it contains; even if this were wanted, which certainly is not the caſe now; that lawſuit having been given up, as ſoon as the dream on which it was founded had paſſed away. But on the well-known principle, " *Tractant fabrilia fabri, promittunt me-* " *dici quod medicorum eſt*," I hope I ſhall not be deemed guilty of any impropriety, when I make ſome phyſical remarks on it.

It appears from the whole tenor, nay even from the very *title* of that Memorial, that Mr Charles Bell had dreamed, *verbatim et literatim*, the ſame dream which his elder brother had dreamed. This, if the dream had gone no farther, might be attributed to their

their being both of the ſame education and profeſſion, Surgeons. But it appears plainly that a third brother, a lawyer, of totally different education, profeſſion, and habits of reading and thinking, has alſo dreamed the ſame dream, without the leaſt variation. This can proceed from nothing but a ſtrong innate family-likeneſs; and muſt be conſidered as a very ſtriking example of the force of that principle; at leaſt as ſplendid as that of the three brothers, of my kindred, who were Profeſſors of Mathematics at the ſame time; or as that of the three noble noſeleſs brothers, who flouriſhed in England in the reign of Charles II.

From the uncommon ſpirit, ingenuity, and eloquence, with which that Memorial is written, totally unlike the dry, laborious, ponderous argument of a lawyer, who pleads a cauſe that he knows to be bad, merely to earn his fee; there can be no doubt that the author of it was perfectly in earneſt; that is, that he had dreamed the ſame dream with his brothers; elſe ſurely, inſtead of arguing their cauſe for them, he would have prevented them from engaging in ſuch a lawſuit: and it is equally plain, that, as ſoon as the dream was at an end, they deſiſted from their lawſuit, without even waiting for the deciſion of the court. This ſurely their brother and lawyer would not have allowed, if the dream had continued with him, after it had ceaſed with them. If there had been three hundred brothers of the Bellian race, I have not a doubt that all of them would have dreamed exactly the ſame dream. But if three thouſand men, of talents, education, and knowledge, equal to theirs, or even greater, were to dream ſtraight forwards, without interruption, for three thouſand centuries, I do not believe that any one of them could dream one iota of it, any more than he could dream Homer's Iliad, Newton's Principia, or the Devil's Concerto.

Scarce had the Lawyers time to ſing *Te Deum* on the happy concluſion of the eighteenth century, with the beginning of a

moſt promiſing lawſuit, whoſe ending who could tell; the one I mean between the two Great Corporations, the College of Surgeons and the Managers of the Infirmary; when they were bleſſed with the birth of another lawſuit, that of Meſſ. John and Charles Bell with the ſaid Managers. Scarce had they time to hail this happy omen, that uſhered in the nineteenth century, with the faireſt promiſes that it would prove an age of gold; ſcarce could they welcome the auſpicious day that gave it to the Court,

Salve fugacis gloriâ ſeculi;
Salve ſecunda digna dies nota;
Salve vetuſtæ vitæ imago,
Et ſpecimen venientis ævi,

when, from the ſame unquenchable and everlaſting fire, there ſuddenly burſt forth, almoſt at the ſame inſtant, three freſh exploſions, in the form of three new lawſuits, each of them more inveterate than either of the former two. Theſe I conceive to bear the ſame relation to their common ſource, that the little volcanos, from time to time thrown up on the ſides of Mount Ætna, during a great eruption, bear to that majeſtic father of volcanos. We call them little, though each of them ſingly is greater and more tremendous than Veſuvius; becauſe they are ſmall in compariſon of their parent Ætna. The whole Court was thunderſtruck. No Member of it had powers of underſtanding, or of imagination, adequate to ſo new and ſo vaſt an object. Some of them thought it was a kind of Hydra: but there could not be a greater miſtake, or a greater indignity to this dreadful fiery monſter; compared to which, the Lernæan Hydra was but a caterpillar. Beſides, this *non deſcript* monſter did not wait, like the Hydra, till its firſt head was chopped off, before it ſhowed another and another; but came forth at once with many heads,

" fierce

" fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell;" and no doubt would have gone on, multiplying itſelf at head and tail, and back, and belly, and ſides, like a polypus, to the delight and emolument of every limb of the law in this country; had it not been for a ſudden and lamentable deficiency of the one thing needful, without which there can be no Law, no War, no Evil, and very little Phyſic: Money, money; which, " above ground, or " under, was not to be found."

Nec, quæ ſulfureis ardet fornacibus, Ætne
Ignea ſemper erit: neque enim fuit ignea ſemper.
Nempe ubi terra cibos alimentaque pinguia flammæ
Non dabit, abſumptis per longum viribus ævum,
Naturæque ſuum nutrimen deerit edaci;
Non feret illa famem: deſertaque deſeret ignes.

There is reaſon to think, that the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons, who ſo eagerly went to law, did not rightly underſtand its *Naturam edacem;* but they muſt ſoon have perceived, that, without much preſſing, or any very nice ſauce, it would eat up all the food, *alimentaque pinguia flammæ*, that have come from Peru and Chili ſince the days of Pizarro; " ever eating, " never cloying, all devouring, all deſtroying."

My collection of the law-papers already printed in the courſe of theſe lawſuits, though I am ſorry to ſay it is far from complete, amounts to more than 500 pages in quarto.

It would be very improper for me to enter into any minute diſcuſſion of cauſes not yet out of court: but there can be no harm in mentioning what the ſubjects of them have been. Two Fellows of the Royal College have proſecuted the majority of their brethren, for almoſt disfranchiſing them; at leaſt ſtriking their names out of the liſt of the Fellows who were to be allowed to vote in the

the great queſtion between their College and the Managers of the Infirmary: and the Preſident of their Royal College proſecutes eighteen Fellows of it, for ignominiouſly turning him out of his chair, and cenſuring him, in terms almoſt too groſs to mention, for ſome pretended miſconduct on his part. I ſhould not have preſumed to give here the words of ſuch a cenſure, if they had not already appeared in print, and been very generally known; nor can I even now print them, without premiſing, that the perſon ſo ignominiouſly treated by his own College, is a gentleman highly and univerſally eſteemed both for his perſonal and profeſſional character.

That vote of cenſure was in the following terms: " I am directed by the Royal College of Surgeons, of which you are Preſident, to repreſent to you from this chair, that you have (with your eyes open) trampled on our laws, which, by your ſituation as Preſident, you were bound more particularly to defend, and that your offence is highly aggravated by your conduct previous to the meeting called by the committee, as well as from the nature of the defence you urged in your own behalf; and by direction of the College, I now cenſure you, in the ſtrongeſt and moſt unequivocal manner, for ſuch conduct."

Whatever damages may be awarded him by a court of juſtice for ſuch a wrong, we have already complete evidence that it was a wrong of the groſſeſt kind, proceeding from the moſt rancorous ſpirit of party; for the ſame College, afterwards, when he went out of office, *unanimouſly* voted him its thanks for his upright and gentlemanlike conduct, as its Preſident, and for his faithful attention to the honour and intereſt of the College. Not having acceſs to their minutes, I cannot give the preciſe words of that vote of thanks; but I am well aſſured that it was expreſſed in the ſtrongeſt and moſt honourable terms, and was in ſubſtance what I have ſtated.

I am well aſſured likewiſe, that one of the other two gentlemen, who has been proſecuting them for ſtriking his name out of their liſt, has ſince that time had the honour of receiving their public thanks for his faithful and meritorious ſervices as a Member of their College.

One little ſpecimen more may ſuffice to convey ſome notion of the noble ſpirit with which their diſputes have been conducted. A Fellow of their College, ſettled in a town in England, was prevailed on to come to Edinburgh, from the diſtance of more than a hundred and fifty miles, juſt by his vote to ſettle thoſe diſputes with which their Royal College was tormented. He came to Edinburgh and voted accordingly; but had ſcarce returned, or, as ſome ſay, was only on his way returning to his home, happy no doubt in the thought of having ſo eaſily and effectually put an end to their diſputes, when he had three ſummonſes executed upon him, (*Anglicè*, had three writs ſerved on him), indicating the commencement of three ſeveral lawſuits, in which he had the agreeable ſurpriſe of finding himſelf involved for his pains, and actually under proſecution for damages to the amount of more than L. 10,000.

Such, from the moſt preciſe and authentic information, as well as from many written, and many more printed, documents, that I have ſeen, I firmly believe to have been the *facts*, in whatever words they may be expreſſed, with reſpect to the ſpirit and temper that have prevailed in the Royal College of Surgeons, and the manner in which their warfare has been carried on, during the laſt ſeven and twenty years; that is, ever ſince they were *elected* (as one of their own moſt eloquent and ſpirited writers calls it) into a Royal College, and for two years before they obtained that honour.

How

How much better or worſe they were, when aſſociated only as a corporation, I really do not know; and I ſhould think it hardly worth while to enquire. We know ſufficiently what their ſentiments, and words, and actions were, about the years 1737 and 1738; and alſo what they were between the years 1766 and 1769, the period of their ſecond and longeſt conteſt with the Managers of the Infirmary.

It is more intereſting to obſerve the ſtrange effect which their new and honourable title has had on many of the Members of that Royal College; in making them believe that they are, individually and collectively, every thing that is great, and good, and amiable, in human nature; and that their "College is a conſtitutional bar-"rier againſt the intruſion of ignorant, unworthy, or unprin-"cipled men, into a profeſſion which ſhould be ever ſacred"; and "that this barrier is the ſafeguard of the poor:" and all this at the very time when they have been reviling one another moſt inveterately, as the moſt ignorant, unworthy, and unprincipled of men.

The calamitous ſituation of thoſe who have adopted ſuch ſtrange whims about the nature and purpoſe of a Royal College of Surgeons, and the importance and dignity, as well as the peculiarly amiable character which that title gives to every individual Member of ſuch a Society, muſt equally rouſe the attention of men of ſcience, eſpecially of Phyſicians, and call forth the ſtrongeſt exertions of every perſon who has any pretenſions to humanity, Chriſtian charity, or brotherly love.

It is indeed impoſſible to think of it without ſpeculating a little concerning its cauſe, and wiſhing to relieve the unhappy ſufferers, though they themſelves are inſenſible of their own misfortune. To many people it muſt appear incredible, that any individual, or any ſet of men, who can eat their victuals, and perform the common offices of nature, in a decent and cleanly manner, ſhould

ever

ever adopt ſuch notions, and perſiſt in them, in ſpite of the daily evidence of their reaſon and of their ſenſes. But ſuch things are not impoſſible: there have been many real inſtances, juſt like the well known fictitious caſe of Don Quixote, of perſons ſufficiently in their ſenſes on all ſubjects but one, and yet on that one as completely inſane as he was on knight-errantry. Examples have not been very rare of men who believed their legs to be made of ſtraw, or their poſteriors of glaſs; and who could never be ſet right on theſe points, though perfectly rational upon every other, and even very judiciouſly and tenderly careful of the ſuppoſed brittle and infirm parts of their conſtitutions. We read, in Aretæus, (chapter 6th of his firſt book on the Cauſes and Symptoms of Chronic Diſeaſes), of a ſtrange fellow, whoſe inſanity was of a very peculiar and limited kind: he was by trade a carpenter; and in his own ſhop, and while employed in his own buſineſs, as much in his ſenſes as any body. He would meaſure, and cut, and ſaw, and fit his timber very nicely; and was withal a ſhrewd fellow, who could make a bargain, or a bill, as well as any man. But the inſtant that he laid down his tools, and quitted his ſhop and his work, and turned his noſe towards the forum, he began to groan, and ſhrug his ſhoulders; and by the time he got to the forum, was *bona fide* as mad as a March hare; but always returned to his ſenſes, as ſoon as he was brought back to his ſhop: ſo that, as Aretæus ſagaciouſly obſerves, his underſtanding and his trade ſeemed to be confined within the ſame narrow limits.

If the infatuation, with reſpect to the College of Surgeons, had occurred in only one individual, I ſhould have conſidered his caſe as exactly ſimilar to that of the carpenter: but as it has affected many individuals of the ſame College at the ſame time, which is not in the common courſe of nature with reſpect to maniacal affections, I cannot think it properly referable to any known kind of mental derangement.

To adopt ſuch an unfavourable opinion of their caſe, would be the ſame, or at leaſt as uncharitable, as to regard it as a judgment upon them, for their miſdeeds done as a body to the ſick poor in the Royal Infirmary. It would be thought, that I wiſhed to repreſent it as near akin to that blindneſs, with which, on a memorable occaſion, ſome men of Sodom were ſtruck, for perſiſting in their wickedneſs.

On conſidering their caſe attentively, I had the good fortune to diſcover the real nature and cauſe of it; and I can even propoſe, with great confidence, the proper means for their relief. They will ſurely be ſenſible of their obligations to me, when they know that I have gone more than half way to the Devil on their account. Having clearly perceived, that their infatuation did not proceed from any bodily diſorder or infirmity, I was led to ſuſpect that it was a caſe of enchantment. As I am but little verſed in magic myſelf, I could not truſt to my own judgment on ſuch a point; and therefore conſulted the ſage enchanter Merlin; who moſt obligingly conſidered their caſe with attention, and ſoon convinced me, by the moſt deciſive arguments, that it was enchantment, as real, and of the ſame kind, as that of Dulcinea del Toboſo.

The ſame kind enchanter explained to me fully how the magic ſpell might be broken: it being a ſettled point in the black art, that for every ſpell there is a counter ſpell.

The chief, or only difficulty, in breaking a ſpell, when the counter ſpell is once diſcovered, ariſes from the circumſtance, that perſons enchanted, juſt like mad perſons, and perſons in love, are very unwilling to be diſenchanted.

I fear there may be ſome ſuch difficulty in diſenchanting thoſe whoſe piteous caſe has given occaſion to theſe remarks: but the difficulty, with due care and addreſs, may be ſurmounted. The counter ſpell, or mode of diſenchanting them, is in ſubſtance the ſame

ſame with that which Merlin directed Sancho Panza to employ on his own perſon, in order to diſenchant Dulcinea; only *mutatis mutandis*. This being a collegiate enchantment, it is neceſſary that the ſpell for breaking it be performed publicly, and with due ſolemnity, in the Hall of the Royal College, and by the Preſident, and all the Fellows of it in rotation; in which caſe, it is demonſtrable, that it will be faithfully and ably performed; and with ſuch complete ſucceſs, that the enchanted perſons, one after another, as ſoon as number three thouſand three hundred is duly applied to the place appointed, ſhall feel themſelves not only diſenchanted *pro hac vice*, but effectually preſerved from all danger of ſuch another enchantment as long as they live. Q. E. F.

One of the moſt amuſing of Mr John Bell's conceits, is the admirable contraſt which he draws between Phyſic and Surgery; in order to ſhow that experience, which every body allows to be highly valuable in a Phyſician, is of no conſequence, and really not needed in a Surgeon. This, to the beſt of my judgment, is the ſum and ſubſtance of his long and elaborate argument, to prove, that it can be no diſadvantage to the patients in the Hoſpital, to be treated by the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced Surgeons in rotation. It is plain, at leaſt, that nothing leſs can eſtabliſh the point for which he contends. I quote his own words, (Section 2. page 48.) in which that doctrine is moſt explicitly delivered. " He knows little indeed of our common profeſſion, " who is not ſenſible, that experience is leſs neceſſary in Surgery " than in Medical Practice, and in operations not at all. An opera- " tion is a diſſection, which he who is able to perform, is able to " perform! Far from learning by experience, a Surgeon muſt be " perfect in operations before he preſume to touch the knife.

" But the memorialiſt is ſo ignorant in our profeſſion, that he " applies to it the rules and canons of his own: he believes that " Surgery, like Medicine, is an uncertain and ſpeculative ſcience! " he believes, that in our profeſſion, what is wiſe and learned to- " day, may be wrong and ignorant to-morrow! that our profeſ- " ſion is learnt by experience, and not by ſtudy! and finally, that " old Surgeons only can excel: though, if this were true, ours " would be a profeſſion in which no man could excel, ſince the " grey head of wiſdom is generally accompanied with a ſhaking " and faultering hand."

I have no inclination to diſpute Mr John Bell's aſſertion, that he who *is able* to perform an operation or a diſſection, *is able* to perform it; on the contrary, I admit that moſtimportant propoſition in its full extent; and I declare, that I think it contains more truth, than all the reſt of his pamphlet put together. It is indeed completely loaded and ſtuffed with truth. But ſtill a very important queſtion remains; namely, Who are able to perform diſſections or operations? Certainly not every man who chooſes Surgery as a profeſſion, for it is notorious, that but a very ſmall proportion of them ever become even tolerable operators; and that many of them have ſoon become ſo ſenſible of their own incapacity in that reſpect, that for the greater part of their lives, they have avoided, as much as poſſible, attempting any nice, difficult, or dangerous operation. I doubt much, whether even all the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh are equally, or nearly equally able to perform that kind of diſſection which is called an operation: the general perſuaſion of mankind moſt notoriouſly is, that they are not: as is amply teſtified by their anxiety to chooſe a ſkilful operator when themſelves or any of their families are to undergo an operation. It is not even pretended by Mr John Bell himſelf, who has ſaid ſo much of their examinations by the Royal College, that they are obliged to exhibit any ſpecimens of their manual dexterity

terity as diſſectors or operators, in preſence of that auguſt Body, before they can become Members of it; and it is certain, that, within the memory of many people ſtill living, ſeveral of them when they had occaſion to ſhow in the Theatre of this Hoſpital how well they could diſſect a living ſubject, or as the vulgar call it, perform an operation, acquitted themſelves ſo ſcurvily, that they were ſeverely criticiſed by ſome of their own loving Brethren, as well as by a great body of Students, who witneſſed the diſſections which they attempted to perform.

I can even remember diſtinctly to have heard a moſt irreverent expreſſion applied to ſome of them, who, after repeated attempts of that kind, had withdrawn from the Hoſpital-duty: That they were hiſſed off the ſtage.

Further, granting that an operation is a diſſection, I humbly conceive that there are very different kinds of diſſections, and that many a man who can perform one kind of diſſection very well, may be a little embarraſſed at firſt if he tries his hand at another kind. Thus, the flaying and cutting up of an ox are unqueſtionably diſſections; ſo is the carving of a roaſted hare or a partridge at table: but I believe a journeyman butcher can perform thoſe diſſections of an ox, and many a fine Lady thoſe of a hare or partridge, as well as any Profeſſor of Anatomy in Europe; or even as Mr John Bell himſelf: yet both the butcher and the Lady might be much embarraſſed, if required to perform thoſe diſſections, *alias* operations, on living perſons, which are often found neceſſary in hoſpitals. That kind of diſſection, which is chiefly required in learning and teaching Anatomy, in order to ſhow diſtinctly the minute and exquiſite ſtructure of every part of the animal body, is widely different from that kind of diſſection which is neceſſary in performing Chirurgical operations. A certain degree of Anatomical knowledge is abſolutely neceſſary for operating as a Surgeon with ſafety and ſucceſs; but many Surgeons, who have had much

practice

practice and high reputation as operators, would be ſadly at a loſs, if they were required to diſſect and demonſtrate the minute ſtructure of parts, as is done in an Anatomical Theatre: and I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that many good Anatomiſts, and expert diſſectors, would feel themſelves much embarraſſed, if they were required to operate on the living ſubject. I know not what Mr John Bell and his clients may think of the Profeſſors of Anatomy in this reſpect; but, I preſume, none of them can fancy themſelves either better Anatomiſts, or more expert diſſectors than Dr Monro's aſſiſtant Mr Fyfe; yet, I doubt whether any one of them, if he had occaſion to undergo a nice and dangerous operation, would chooſe for the operator, Mr Fyfe, rather than an experienced Surgeon.

Further, if every Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, at the hour of his admiſſion, were as good a diſſector of the living, as Mr Fyfe is of the dead, it would not follow that they were all equally well qualified for being Hoſpital Surgeons. The performing of operations, though an eſſential, is not the moſt important, part, of a Surgeon's duty and profeſſion. It is more to a Surgeon's credit to ſave one limb, than to cut off a hundred. Much of Chirurgical practice has nothing to do with diſſection: the curing of wounds and ulcers; the treatment of external inflammation and gangrene; the diſcuſſing of tumours; the reducing of ruptures and of diſlocated limbs; and the ſetting of broken bones; are daily and moſt important objects of Chirurgical practice, and ſuch as no practice nor dexterity in diſſection can teach. With due humility, I muſt beg leave to think, that a Surgeon may improve in thoſe parts of his profeſſion, juſt as a Phyſician does in his, by the help of experience.

If the ſcience of Surgery were as certain, and the practice of the art as perfect, as Mr John Bell's argument imports, there could be no diſputes or controverſies in it: indeed from ſome of his expreſſions it ſhould ſeem, that ſuch is his opinion, or at leaſt that

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ſuch is the belief which he wiſhes to impreſs on his readers. I ſuſpect, however, that this perfect agreement in opinion, if it exiſts at all, muſt be near a-kin to that of an Engliſh Jury, that I remember to have heard of. They had retired, as uſual, to conſider of their verdict; and had ſtaid ſo long, that the Judge, who tried the cauſe, and who thought it a very plain one, growing impatient, called them into Court again, and aſked them, whether they had agreed on their verdict. "Yes, my Lord," ſaid a keen little juryman, in a violent paſſion, "I am agreed, but here are "eleven obſtinate fellows that I believe will never agree." Far from believing that Mr John Bell agrees with all his brethren on every point, or even on the moſt important points, of the Theory and Practice of Surgery, I doubt much whether he agrees with the majority of them, nay whether he even agrees with all the Surgeons of his own name. Surgeons have unqueſtionably much more merit, and diſplay much higher genius, in their everlaſting profeſſional diſputes, than Phyſicians can do in theirs: for as much as the ſubjects of Chirurgical diſputes generally come under the cognizance of their ſenſes of ſight and feeling; ſo that unleſs they chooſe it, they need not truſt much to the faint and deceitful light of their own reaſon. Yet certain it is, that in defiance of their own ſenſes, they now and then commit miſtakes as groſs, and engage in diſputes as inveterate, as Phyſicians can do for their hearts. I remember, many years ago, to have heard of a miſtake and diſpute of this kind, in this city, about a Lady's arm, which one Surgeon examined and dreſſed as he thought it required. But the Lady finding no relief, or rather finding her arm growing worſe and more painful, got another Surgeon to examine it; partly I believe by accident, the former Surgeon not being to be found, when ſhe ſent for him on account of her increaſing ſufferings. The ſecond Surgeon, on examining the arm, found that one of the bones of it was broken; and accordingly

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ſet it properly, which ſoon gave her relief. But the former Surgeon would not acquieſce in this opinion or practice: nor do I believe that the two have to this hour agreed in their opinion about that caſe. Another caſe of the ſame kind, but infinitely worſe, came under my own immediate view. The unfortunate ſubject of it was a relation of my own, one of whom I had a particular charge, one who had often carried me in her arms when I was an infant. One day the man in whoſe houſe ſhe lodged came to tell me that ſhe was very ill, and had got a ſwelled leg. Going inſtantly to ſee her, I found her very ill indeed; her leg greatly ſwelled, red, highly inflamed, bent in the middle, and much ſhorter than the other; ſo that I preſume a child of ſeven years of age might have known at firſt ſight, as I did, notwithſtanding my criminal ignorance of Surgery, that the leg was broken. On enquiring into the hiſtory of the caſe, I learned that this accident had happened above a week before, by a fall on the floor of her room. It happened at night; and the perſons about her, obſerving that her leg was much hurt, got a Surgeon, a Fellow of the Royal College of this city, to ſee her next morning, He ſaw her ſeveral times, ſent her ſomething to rub her leg with, which might with equal advantage to her, have been rubbed on her bed-poſt, but made no attempt to ſet her broken leg. This neceſſarily implies one of two things; either that he did not diſcover that her leg was broken, or elſe, that, knowing it to be broken, he would rather let her periſh miſerably, than take the trouble to ſet it. The circumſtance which procured me intelligence of her miſerable ſituation was the rapid increaſe of the fever, produced by the accident, and the beginning of delirium. Shocked at ſuch an example of negligence, I ran immediately to get ſome other Surgeon to her aſſiſtance; and had not gone a hundred yards when I luckily met with one. This other Surgeon, whom for the preſent I ſhall call Dr William Farquharſon, truſting to his honour that he will not

mention

mention the name of his profeſſional brother who was ſo *unfortunate* on that occaſion, inſtantly went with me to the patient; and on examining the leg, made me obſerve, what I had not attended to before, that not only the leg was broken, but the ſmall bone of it (*Fibula*) was diſlocated at the knee. Dr F. at firſt declined attempting to ſet the leg, not only on account of the high inflammation of it, but on account of the ſtate of general fever, which was ſo bad that he conſidered the patient (very rightly as it afterwards appeared) to be a dying perſon. However, at my earneſt entreaty, he endeavoured as ſoon as poſſible to ſet it, and I believe did it as well as it could be done; but too late to ſave her life; ſhe died in a few days with the increaſing fever and delirium. There was properly no diſpute or contradiction about that caſe; Dr F. having very prudently, before he attempted to ſet the leg, taken with him a *third* Surgeon, a particular friend of the firſt Surgeon, to ſee, and be convinced that the leg was really broken, and that the patient was likely to die of the fever produced by the fracture, which had been ſo atrociouſly neglected.

As the beſt commentary on Mr John Bell's text, about the certainty and perfection of the Science and the Art of Surgery, I ſhall mention a little incident which occurred, a few years ago, in a certain London Hoſpital.

A patient was in it under the care of the Phyſicians, on account of a very bad leg, which baffled their ſkill, and appeared to them almoſt hopeleſs; they therefore requeſted a conſultation of the Surgeons, to examine the leg, and to decide what ſhould be done with it. The Surgeons accordingly met, examined it, conſulted about it, and reſolved, *nemine contradicente*, that the leg could not be ſaved, and ought to be cut off. By the unerring rules of Surgery, they cut it off without delay. But, ſtrange to tell, the Phyſicians, at their next viſit, on examining the patient, found, to their great aſtoniſhment, the ſuppoſed hopeleſs leg as faſt to his body

as ever it had been. The puzzle was ſoon explained. It happened that the man had *two* legs, both of them very bad; one of them the Phyſicians thought they could ſave, the other they deſpaired of. There being but a right and a wrong, it was not very marvellous that the conſultation took the wrong. Both Phyſicians and Surgeons I believe were a little diſconcerted at that *quid pro quo*; and as it was thought rather a ſtrong meaſure to cut off both the man's legs, they exerted themſelves to the utmoſt, and ſaved the leg which ſhould have been cut off: ſo that after all the poor man was but one leg out of pocket. As I was not an eye-witneſs of this edifying tranſaction, it is proper to give ſome notion of the genealogy of the ſtory, which is very ſhort and ſimple. I have it from a Reverend Clergyman, who had it from one of the Phyſicians concerned, and who is now one of the moſt eminent of his profeſſion in London. I know both the Clergyman and the Phyſician intimately; I know them both to be men of veracity and men of ſenſe; and I have no doubt that the facts were juſt as I have ſtated them.

This remarkable misfortune which I have deſcribed, and many others of the ſame kind, but often worſe in degree, have proceeded evidently, from the greater eagerneſs of ſeveral Surgeons to perform operations, than to cure their patients without them. This unfortunate bias I have heard more than one of them confeſs having felt in themſelves. Whether it proceeds from their eager deſire to acquire dexterity as operators, or from a kind of vanity and ambition to diſplay that dexterity which they had, or thought they had, already acquired, perhaps by practiſing on the dead ſubject, is a matter of little or no conſequence to their living patients. Nor is it much better for theſe, when they fall into the hands of Surgeons, who, conſcious of their own deficiencies as operators, are unwilling to expoſe them to public view, and therefore decline, or poſtpone from time to time, operations which might

might probably have ſucceeded, if performed early, but which, when long delayed, have but a ſmall chance of ſucceſs, even when performed by the moſt ſkilful operator.

It is difficult to conceive any thing more repugnant to daily, or at leaſt to by far too frequent experience, than Mr John Bell's doctrine, of the great certainty of the ſcience, and the high perfection of the art of ſurgery. To confine myſelf to a few examples, which muſt have been known to him, of the obſtinate and irreconcileable differences of opinion amongſt Surgeons, I ſhall mention, in the firſt place, ſome of the particulars of that caſe already mentioned in general terms, page 132. 3. of this Memorial. A gentleman had ſuffered much diſtreſs and pain by a diſorder, which had continued and increaſed on him for thirteen months, during which time it had baffled the ſkill of two eminent Surgeons whom he had employed, and who certainly had not diſcovered, and do not ſeem even to have ſuſpected, what was the nature of the diſorder. In this condition he came to Edinburgh, and conſulted Mr Benjamin Bell, Mr Arrot, and myſelf. There was no doubt, or difficulty, or difference of opinion among us, as to the nature of his diſeaſe, which was as plain a Hydrocele as ever was ſeen. We told him ſo immediately, explained to him the nature of the diſorder, and aſſured him of the facility and certainty of curing it by an operation, and the impoſſibility of curing it any other way. He was at firſt much ſurpriſed, and ſomewhat incredulous, perhaps thinking it impoſſible that his former Surgeons could have been ſo ſtrangely miſtaken: but on finding his Edinburgh Surgeons perfectly decided in their opinion, and willing to operate immediately, he ſoon acquieſced in their judgment. Underſtanding, however, that he muſt expect to be confined, by the operation, for a fortnight or more, he ſaid it was neceſſary for him to return home, in order to arrange his affairs for ſo long an abſence; but intimated his reſolution of either returning to Edinburgh in two

or three weeks, or elſe ſending for Mr Benjamin Bell, and allowing him to operate.

Several weeks elapſed, yet we heard no more of our patient; till I, happening to paſs through the place where he lived, the latitude and longitude of which I do not chooſe at preſent to remember, went to ſee him, and inquired into his ſituation. His bodily health was nearly *in ſtatu quo*, but I found him in a ſtate of mental anguiſh and horror not to be deſcribed. His former Surgeons, as ſoon as he informed them of our opinion, and advice as to the operation, declared againſt it in the ſtrongeſt poſſible terms, aſſuring him that the diſeaſe could not be what we had ſaid. Still worſe, I found my patient minutely informed of all the horrible conſequences that a man in his ſituation had to fear; but with this unlucky perſuaſion, that they were all to be dreaded from the *operation*, not from the *diſeaſe;* as I, and I preſume every Phyſician and Surgeon in Europe, conceive to be the caſe.

I told him, it was impoſſible for me to alter my opinion; and that he muſt judge for himſelf, and follow the advice which he liked beſt; at the ſame time informing him, that the horrible conſequences which he had been taught to dread were to be apprehended from the diſeaſe, not from the operation; by which alone they could be prevented. He aſked me to meet with his Surgeons, and to conſult with them about his caſe. I had even a formal invitation from the Surgeons themſelves to ſuch a conſultation, which I peremptorily declined, not being in the humour, juſt at that time, to be clapperclawed by thoſe gentlemen; and as to clapperclawing them, at any time, I ſhould have thought it a very needleſs labour. The next news I heard of my patient, from one of his moſt intimate friends, was, that Mr John Bell had, by his two Surgeons, been called in to ſee him; evidently in hopes that he would decide againſt the opinion of Mr Benjamin Bell and the operation.

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But Mr John Bell was too ſharp for them, and very honeſtly declared that the diſeaſe was a Hydrocele; offered to perform the operation inſtantly, and did actually perform it, I believe, the very next day, and cured the patient without the ſmalleſt difficulty.

Yet thoſe two Surgeons are men of eminence in their profeſſion; and if they were to come and ſettle in Edinburgh, I dare ſay would expect to take the lead of three fourths of their brethren in this city, and probably of Mr John Bell himſelf.

The ſame certain ſcience, and enlightened and candid application of its principles, have often produced thoſe fierce debates, and irreconcileable differences of opinion, in the conſulting-room of this Hoſpital, to which I alluded in my former Memorial.

Many a queſtion, after full conſultation and debate, has been decided by a vote, each party holding faſt its own firſt opinion: ſome ſuch points have been decided by a very ſmall majority, ſome even by the attending Surgeon's caſting vote: ſome have been decided firſt one way, then the oppoſite; the minority on the firſt day watching their opportunity, when the houſe was *properly* aſſembled, and when thoſe whoſe opinions might be ſuppoſed to have had the greateſt weight, were abſent; ſo that their votes at leaſt could not tell in favour of their opinion. One miſerable example of a ſufferer by this practice, whom for the preſent I ſhall call J. R. I ſaw about two years ago; long after ſhe had been diſmiſſed from the Hoſpital as incurable. What her fate might have been, if the long and keenly conteſted queſtion about an operation to be performed on her had been decided the other way, I cannot gueſs; but I ſcarce think it could have been worſe than what ſhe has actually ſuffered, ever ſince the hour that the operation was performed. I never ſaw a more ſhocking or miſerable object; nor can I conceive a ſtronger refutation of Mr John Bell's doctrine of the certainty of the principles of ſurgery. Some

Surgeons,

Surgeons, who have done good ſervice in this Hoſpital, make no ſcruple to declare, that the vexation ariſing from thoſe obſtinate debates, and repeated conſultations, was one of their chief reaſons for withdrawing from its duties.

Mr John Bell can ſcarce have forgotten a pretty remarkable conſultation about a certain tumour. The firſt Surgeon who was deſired to declare his opinion, pronounced, without heſitation, that it was a rupture, ſomewhat conſtricted, but not completely ſtrangulated. This gentleman, a pretty ſharp one too, *nec pluribus impar*, one whom I could truſt againſt half a dozen or more of his brethren, happened to be of *one* party, or of *no* party, whichever Mr John Bell pleaſes to call it. Of courſe, thoſe of the other party were unanimouſly convinced that it was no rupture, but only a bubo, which was to be brought to ſuppuration by poultices, and opened when ripe. They would not even liſten to the ſuggeſtion of one of the t'other-ſide gentlemen, who wickedly propoſed, that, as the man's life was at ſtake, they ſhould make an inciſion through the ſkin, which could be attended with no danger, and would enable them to judge with certainty what was the nature of the tumour. Being the majority, they determined for the bubo and the poultice.

Next day, when they met again in conſultation, and began to enquire about the patient, the bird was flown. This was a prodigious triumph to the antirupturiſts, who were ſure that a man with ſo bad a rupture could not have run away. But the rupturiſts were as ſharp and as obſtinate as their adverſaries; and moſt maliciouſly traced the poor man to his own home, at the diſtance of a few miles from Edinburgh. It appeared that the poor man, who, from what he felt in his inſide, was well convinced that the vote of bubo and poultice was to do him no good, eloped from the Hoſpital next morning, and found means to crawl to a cart, which he found on the ſtreet,

and

and which conveyed him to his own houſe, where he died in two or three days. But having been traced by that time, permiſſion was obtained to open his body, which was done in preſence of ſeveral antirupturiſts as well as rupturiſts: the rupture was found, as was expected by the latter party. It is even ſurmiſed, that a preparation of the morbid parts is ſtill in the poſſeſſion of one of the antirupturiſts. When I ſtate ſuch an occurrence, it may naturally be aſked by thoſe unacquainted with medical warfare, whether I really believe it; and if I do, whether I impute ſuch conduct to ſheer ignorance, or to the moſt unfeeling cruelty, and a deliberate purpoſe of ſomething little leſs than murder. As to the firſt queſtion, I anſwer without ſcruple, that I believe it firmly; becauſe I have heard it from ſeveral Surgeons who were concerned in the tranſaction, and whom I know to be men of ſenſe and veracity. As to the ſecond queſtion, with much diffidence, I give it as my opinion, that it could not be either from ignorance, or from a deliberate purpoſe of letting the poor man periſh. Such ignorance is incredible of any perſon who knows what a rupture is; and ſuch deliberate cruelty towards an unoffending, unhappy object, is inconſiſtent with my notions of human nature. I humbly conceive that the misfortune aroſe, as many other ſimilar misfortunes have ariſen, from the violent ſpirit of party, and that irritation and inveteracy which are almoſt peculiar to medical diſputants. I think it highly probable, that if thoſe gentlemen who were ſo unfortunate on that occaſion had been acting ſingly, or even ſeveral of them together, but coolly, and not pitted againſt their opponents, they would have judged and acted properly. I know no bounds to the violence of party-ſpirit. I believe that, like the ſpirit of gaming, or any very violent paſſion, it often makes men deaf, blind, and inſenſible to every other conſideration, even to the moſt ſacred and tender that human nature knows; and with this horrible aggravation, that many, far from being aſhamed

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of it, conſider it as their proudeſt boaſt and moſt honourable diſtinction; while few, if any, think themſelves individually reſponſible, or even blameable, for what is done by their party.

This, however, I humbly ſuggeſt with a *ſalvo jure* to all concerned. If they can explain, in any manner more ſatisfactory to the public, and more honourable to themſelves, the facts which I have ſtated, and which I believe can ſcarce be diſputed, but, if diſputed, may be eſtabliſhed by irreſiſtible evidence, they are heartily welcome to do it, and I ſhall be glad to ſee it done.

Among the other ſpecimens of the great certainty of Surgery, and of the equal and perfect ſkill of the Fellows of the Royal College of this City, who of late years have taken a ſhare of the Hoſpital-duty, and formed thoſe multitudinous conſultations, which appeared to me much worſe than uſeleſs; I muſt not omit to mention the irreconcileable difference of opinion with reſpect to a patient having, or not having, a ſtone in his bladder. From a work on Surgery, publiſhed a few years ago by one of theſe Surgeons, it appears to have been no uncommon occurrence, for one or two Surgeons of a numerous conſultation to have felt the ſtone, on ſounding the patient, and for ten or a dozen more of them, after repeated trials, not to have been able to feel it. Theſe differences of opinion ſeem to have been independent of any ſpirit of party; and, ſuppoſing, what it would be highly uncandid to doubt, that they all ſpoke and acted *bona fide*, neceſſarily imply, that ſome of them were much more expert than the majority of their brethren, at that little preliminary operation. It is admitted, I preſume, that a ſtone, even of conſiderable ſize, may be in the bladder, but in ſuch a ſituation, by having formed a ſac for itſelf, that the moſt expert Surgeon cannot feel it. But when a ſtone is diſtinctly felt by two or three, and not felt at all by ten or a dozen of the ſame profeſſion, it is difficult to conceive any other cauſe for ſuch a difference, but ſome want of dexterity in the greater number

ber of them. A moſt cruel evil is implied in the ſounding of an unhappy patient by every individual of a numerous conſultation, even if they were all perfectly ſkilful; and ſtill worſe, if any of them are unſkilful, aukward, or rough, in the uſe of the inſtrument. No patient, it may fairly be preſumed, ever was ſounded by ſuch a conſultation, unleſs he had either a ſtone, or ſome other diſeaſe in his bladder, implying ſuch tenderneſs of it, that the ſlighteſt touch of the ſtaff muſt have given exquiſite pain. It may be doubted whether ſome ſuch multitudinous ſoundings have not amounted to a more ſevere operation, I mean to greater torture, than the final operation of cutting for the ſtone by a ſkilful operator. It is admitted, at leaſt, to have been ſo bad, that often it was neceſſary to employ, for ſeveral days, warm bathing, opiates, and other medicines, to undo the miſchief that had been done by ſuch a preliminary conſultation. See *Latta's Surgery*, *vol.* 1. *page* 479. *to* 493.

The moſt unexceptionable evidence on this point, perhaps the only evidence that Mr John Bell will admit to be competent, is the ſaid Mr John Bell himſelf. " I never ſhall forget the ſight I once ſaw, in " our well regulated and cleanly Hoſpital, where there was ſuch an " exhibition of *ulcera verminoſa*, as perhaps never was ſeen even by " Paree at the ſiege of Turin. Dr Aitken had taken an apprehen- " ſion that we were too apt to trouble ſores by officious dreſſing, " and being deceived, like many others, by the wonderful re- " union of freſh wounds, when laid together, and not dreſſed for " eight days, he formed this promiſing concluſion, that, as ac- " cording to the common ſaying, the " blood is the beſt balſam " for a wound," its own foul matter ſhould be the beſt balſam " for a ſore. He reſolved not to dreſs the ſores of the ſurgical " wards at ſhorter periods than five or ſix days; but that the " matter might not run through the bed during that period, he " made the nurſes gather all their old ſpunges, and apply to each

" ſore a ſpunge. Four or five days after, a great many gentlemen " attended in the wards, on the tiptoe of expectation for the " further iſſue of this experiment! Each ſore, as it was ſuc- " ceſſively opened, was in a horrible condition, " the worms they " crept in, and the worms they crept out," and the Doctor was in " great diſgrace till he diſcovered the cauſe. He had given the " nurſes very ſtrict injunctions about cleanſing their ſpunges, " which they very ſtrictly obeyed; but each ſpunge, after being " waſhed, was laid by the window to dry; it was hatching ſeaſon " with the great flies, who were very glad of the ſpunges to depoſit " their eggs in; and when theſe eggs were laid into the ſores, " and kept there for ſome days, with all the advantages of ſuch a " ſituation, they did hatch with a vengeance." *Principles of Surgery, by John Bell.* 1801. *Page* 102. & 103.

It muſt ſurely have been very ſatisfactory and comfortable to the poor patients who were made the ſubjects of that abſurd experiment, to learn from ſuch good authority, that the worms which had been eating them up alive, had not grown out of their fleſh, but were all of them the lawful children of their fathers and mothers, commonly called blue-bottles: but ſtill there ſeems to have been either great uncertainty of the principles of Surgery, even ſo lately as ſince Mr John Bell was hatched, or elſe ſome very ignorant wrong-headed Surgeons permitted to practiſe in the Royal Infirmary. One other inſtance I ſhall give of the uncertainty of the principles of Surgery, and of the fluctuation, as well as difference of opinion, in the grand conſultation of Surgeons. After minutely deſcribing a caſe of femoral aneuriſm, Mr John Bell proceeds in theſe words.

" This was not indeed one of thoſe caſes where one might ſay " the patient had not many days to live, but yet it was a caſe " inevitably fatal! Operation was unavoidable! It was for the pur- " poſe of having the operation performed that he was laid in the " Hoſpital; and he was a manly hardy fellow, willing to ſubmit

" to

" to any kind of Surgery, eſpecially if it could but preſerve his " limb.

" Mr Harkneſs loſt no time in calling a conſultation. Out of " twelve gentlemen preſent, eight voted for preſerving the limb. " But on the morrow, when Mr Harkneſs had prepared every " thing for the operation of aneuriſm, the gentlemen taking the " caſe again under review, and eſpecially reflecting on the danger- " ous combination of fracture and aneuriſm, and on the difficulty " of ſaving a perſon who has even the moſt ſimple aneuriſm of " the thigh, they reverſed their former opinion. Mr Harkneſs " was forced to amputate the limb; and on the fifth or ſixth day " the man died of gangrene."

That Mr Harkneſs, or any Surgeon in the world, ſhould be *forced* to do what he thought right, is impoſſible; becauſe he would be very willing to do it. We muſt therefore underſtand by this very edifying ſtory, that the attending Surgeon was *forced* to perform an operation which he thought improper, and to cut off a limb which he thought he could have ſaved; nay, which a grand conſultation had thought might be ſaved, though the ſaid conſultation thought fit to reverſe its own deciſion, and to find that wrong to-day which was right yeſterday. A conſultation of twelve Phyſicians, or of twelve Judges, notwithſtanding the glorious uncertainty both of Law and Phyſic, could have done nothing worſe. Indeed, when two oppoſite deciſions are given in a law-ſuit, it is uſual to allow the patient a rubber-game. In ſome countries, if I am rightly informed, the patient has a right to demand ſuch a rubber: but in Surgery there is not always time for a rubber-conſultation; and therefore, if ſuch diſcordant and dangerous conſultations are permitted, reaſon, and juſtice, and humanity, all require that a box and dice ſhould always be ready in the conſulting room; and that, whenever the ſecond conſultation reverſes the deciſion of the firſt, the patient ſhould be entitled, if

he chooſes, to have a throw of the dice to ſettle the queſtion; juſt that he may have an equal chance for his limb or for his life.

I have had occaſion to learn, from the beſt authority, that is, from one of the Surgeons who acted in that uncivil, untractable manner, that the deciſions of certain grand conſultations of Surgeons in this Hoſpital have been ſuch, that the attending Surgeon, whoſe province it was to operate, has abſolutely mutinied, and refuſed to do it; telling his brethren, "Gentlemen, if you "chooſe to cut off this man's leg, or to cut this man for the "ſtone, you may, but I will not." Such adventures muſt no doubt have greatly ſtrengthened their ſentiments of mutual eſteem and confidence, and fully eſtabliſhed, to the conviction of the moſt obſtinate and incredulous of them, the unerring certainty of the principles of Surgery.

It is the more edifying to obſerve how confidently Mr John Bell maintains the certainty of the principles of Surgery, which implies the perfect uniformity of the practice of it, that his own works contain the moſt ample and unequivocal proof, that there are numberleſs diſputes among Surgeons, almoſt as inveterate, and many of them as frivolous, as thoſe which have agitated Phyſicians. If there were no other evidence of this well-known truth, his own writings would afford forty times more than enough. I doubt whether it be poſſible to read, ſtraight forwards, twenty pages of any of his books on Surgery, without meeting with ſeveral proofs and examples of this kind. The curious or diſtruſtful may make the trial at their leiſure, and judge for themſelves. But there is one illuſtrious ſpecimen of it in a book, and a part of a book, in which it could not have been expected; but withal ſo glaring and deciſive, that it muſt not be allowed to paſs unnoticed. The book to which I allude is his Anſwer to me; and the part of that book is the 3d ſection of it, page 37. immediately after he had contended moſt vehemently,

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all through his 2d ſection, (of 50 pages), for the uniform certainty of the principles of Surgery. It may fairly be preſumed, that, if on any occaſion he could have abſtained from profeſſional diſputes, and from treating in the moſt contemptuous manner the opinions and practices of his brethren from whom he choſe to diſſent, he would have done it on that occaſion, on which it was his avowed object to prove that there are no diſputes among them. But, *Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen uſque recurret*, or, as the French expreſs it, *Harlequin toujours Harlequin.* In that ſection of his anſwer he has introduced a long hiſtory, which looks like an old lecture, about the operation of cutting for the ſtone. But be it new, or be it old, it certainly bears no more relation to the queſtion between the Managers and the Surgeons, than the colour of my volunteer uniform, or the number of my anceſtors who have been Profeſſors. It is however made intereſting, and for my purpoſe ineſtimable, by the noble ſpecimen of chirurgical controverſy that he has introduced into it, with reſpect to the uſe of the cutting gorget, which he reprobates in the bittereſt terms of contempt and reproach.

That inſtrument has long been in general uſe; and to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, is to this day uſed by at leaſt nineteen in twenty of the beſt, the moſt intelligent, the moſt experienced, and the moſt ſucceſsful operators in the world. It was introduced at firſt from conſiderations of prudence and humanity; to leſſen the riſk of cutting for the ſtone, by giving, if not abſolute certainty, at leaſt a very great probability, much greater than Surgeons had before, of cutting into the bladder at once, and in the proper place. It has anſwered its purpoſe better than moſt contrivances either in Phyſic or Surgery have done. By means of it the operation has been performed on many thouſands of patients with perfect ſucceſs. Some individual Surgeons have employed it ſucceſsfully on ſeveral hundreds of patients. That it has not al-

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ways made the operation ſucceſsful, is a melancholy truth: nor do I believe that it ever can be made perfectly ſafe, or uniformly ſucceſsful, by any inſtrument, or any human contrivance.

It is a ſtill more melancholy truth, that it has often been employed by operators ſo unſkilful or unpractiſed, that they knew not how to uſe it properly, and conſequently miſſed the bladder, which they meant to cut, and perforated the neareſt bowel, thereby inflicting a mortal wound. Nothing worſe could have happened to thoſe patients, if their Surgeons had attempted to cut them for the ſtone without either ſtaff or gorget. But the important conſideration is, what would probably have been the fate of many hundreds, or thouſands, of thoſe who have recovered perfectly when cut by the gorget, if their Surgeons had not uſed that inſtrument, and had cut them with a plain knife? It is not only my opinion, which on ſuch a queſtion muſt go for nothing, but the opinion of the beſt Surgeons, amply teſtified by their uſing the cutting gorget, that many more would have periſhed by that operation if the cutting gorget had not been uſed. A very expert anatomiſt may cut for the ſtone ſucceſsfully without the help of the gorget, but not more ſucceſsfully or more certainly than he could do with it; and it is not only *poſſible*, but *probable*, that a good anatomiſt may *ſometimes* miſs the bladder, and kill his patient, by not uſing the gorget: neither of which misfortunes would have happened if he had uſed it: and what is only *poſſible*, or ſomewhat *probable*, of a very accurate anatomiſt and expert operator, approaches very near to *certainty*, with reſpect to the generality of Surgeons. The faireſt way to judge of this queſtion is, to aſk any reaſonable number of well-informed profeſſional men, Phyſicians and Surgeons, how they would chooſe to be cut, with the gorget or without it, by any Surgeon taken by lot out of a whole corporation or College of Surgeons, if they themſelves

were

were obliged to ſubmit to the dangerous operation in queſtion. I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that at leaſt ninety-nine in the hundred of them would declare for the cutting gorget; and I doubt much whether Mr John Bell himſelf would be in the minority.

If any illuſtration of ſo plain a ſubject were needed, no better could be deſired than one long ſince rendered familiar and almoſt trite by the uſe which BACON hath made of it.

A few men, but they muſt be few indeed, may have acquired ſuch marvellous dexterity, as to be able to draw a ſtraight line, or an exact circle, with their unaſſiſted hand, without the help of the ruler or compaſſes: but any ordinary man can draw ſuch a ſtraight line, or ſuch a circle, with the help of the proper inſtruments, at leaſt as well, probably better, than the moſt expert draughtſman can do without them. If on any occaſion, ſurely when the life of a man is at ſtake, the certainty, or, if certainty be not attainable, the greateſt probability of ſucceſs that can be attained, is infinitely to be preferred to a vain oſtentatious diſplay of extraordinary dexterity.

With his uſual bad luck as to all matters of fact, Mr John Bell (ſection 3. page 37.) has quoted me as expreſſing contempt and diſapprobation of the cutting gorget employed by Surgeons in lithotomy. Nothing could be farther from my thoughts; nor is there any expreſſion in my former Memorial that can be conſtrued or tortured into ſuch a meaning. As it was intended to be peruſed by many who could not have known what was meant by a cutting gorget, inſtead of uſing that technical phraſe, I *deſcribed* the inſtrument, as a curious knife, like a pointed ſcoop, with a very ſharp edge: but ſurely ſuch a deſcription, which is perfectly juſt, denotes neither contempt nor approbation of it. Far from deſpiſing that inſtrument, I reſpect very highly the caution, the modeſty, and the humanity of that Surgeon, whoever he was, who contrived a little improvement of it, ſo as to bring the uſe of it almoſt to perfect certainty.

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The improvement to which I allude, was the addition of a little button at the point of it; correſponding to which the groove in the ſtaff was made wider at each end than at the middle; ſo that when the button at the end of the gorget was put into the groove at the proper place, which it was impoſſible to miſs, it could not get out again till it reached the further end of the ſtaff, in the bladder; and conſequently the operator could not miſs the bladder, or fail to cut it in the proper place. I remember to have heard more than thirty years ago, that the late Mr Adie, who was dead before my time, but who in his day was conſidered as at the head of his profeſſion, and one of the beſt operators ever known in Edinburgh, at one time actually employed that kind of inſtrument. I never heard what were the objections to its general uſe; but I remember to have been told, that Mr Adie himſelf was ſtartled at the button coming out of the groove, when the gorget was fully introduced, with a kind of ſnap, which he had not expected: but this certainly can be no ſerious objection to its uſe.

Mr John Bell (ſect. 2. page 12.) has hinted ſomething of the Surgeons operating in the Royal Infirmary, "under the obſer-"vance and *criticiſm* of their fellow-members, aſſiſted, and ſup-"ported, and *controuled*, by the preſence of numbers; in an open "area too, where all the world is free to pronounce judgment on "his merits!—If the deſire of reputation, or the fear of ſhame; "*the malignancy of enemies*, who cannot be excluded from opera-"tions, or *the praiſe of friends*, who will group around him; if "fame, fortune, and his own happineſs being at ſtake, will not "induce the young Surgeon to apply to his profeſſion, and be-"come excellent, there is reaſon to deſpair." But with equal prudence and delicacy, he has avoided explaining himſelf fully, or mentioning any particulars on ſo painful a ſubject. I ſhould not wiſh to go very far in ſo unpleaſant a diſcuſſion; but juſt that his delicate alluſion may be in ſome meaſure underſtood, I ſhall men-

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tion in the firſt place, in his own words, ſome of the ſigns and tokens of that *malignancy* and *criticiſm*.

" He (Dr Gregory) never witneſſed the ſeverities of the Sur-
" geon; never ſtrained hard his breath, nor involuntarily clenched
" his hands at the ſight of another's agony; nor blanched with
" fear, nor felt the palpitations of anxiety, in the midſt of an event-
" ful operation! Let a man feel the things he can feel, and his
" ſenſibilities will be applauded." (Anſwer, page 7. line 15. 20).

Whether I am or am not ſubject to hyſterics, and accuſtomed to exhibit the horrid grimaces thus beautifully deſcribed by Mr John Bell, is a queſtion of no moment, either to the Managers or the public; but it is right they ſhould know, that ſuch grimaces, and many ſignificant looks, and nods, and ſhakes of the head, by the grand chorus, made a part of the tragedies performed in the theatre of this Hoſpital. But the chorus did not always confine itſelf to dumb ſhew: as in the Greek tragedies, it ſometimes ſpoke out pretty plainly.

Ille bonis faveatque et concilietur amicis,
Et regat iratos, et amet peccare timentes:
Ille tegat commiſſa, Deoſque precetur et oret,
Ut redeat miſeris, abeat fortuna ſuperbis.

I have heard of more than one inſtance of the principal performer finding it neceſſary to remonſtrate, on the ſpot, in very ſtrong terms, with ſome Members of the chorus. One Fellow of the Royal College aſſured me, that, the very firſt time he operated in that theatre, he met with that vexatious embarraſſment, juſt when he was beginning a ſevere and dangerous operation on the eye. Some others have declared, without ſcruple, that ſuch malignant criticiſms as they were expoſed to in that theatre, would,

of themſelves, independently of all other conſiderations, have determined them to withdraw from the Hoſpital-duty.

One of the firſt articles of information that I received after my former Memorial was diſtributed, related to this point. A gentleman, no way connected with the Hoſpital, and not even of the Medical Profeſſion, mentioned to me how much he was ſtruck with the illuſtration of ſome of my general remarks, which he got from a ſtudent of Phyſic, in accidental converſation. This ſtudent mentioned having heard, in the operation-room, ſome of thoſe malignant criticiſms, delivered by the chorus, *alias* the conſultation, in pretty audible whiſpers, in ſuch terms as theſe, " He " is too high; he is too low; too much to the right; too much " to the left; he is always ſo," &c.

Such remarks muſt have been truly pleaſant, and edifying, both to the operator and the patient, if the latter was in a condition to liſten to them.

Soon afterwards, but yet ſeveral weeks before Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me came forth, I had the good fortune to get by anticipation a good commentary on the paſſage laſt quoted from it, and a full explanation of *the praiſe of friends*, *the malignancy of enemies*, *the obſervance and criticiſm*, which he mentions in ſuch general and delicate terms, as well as of thoſe horrid grimaces which he has condeſcended to deſcribe more particularly. I was told, to my great edification, that it was well underſtood, that *the praiſe of friends*, expreſſed by words and ſigns, was the *price* or reward of a *vote* properly given; and that *the malignancy of enemies*, no leſs plainly expreſſed, was the ſure puniſhment of a *vote* improperly given in the Royal College of Surgeons.

I do not however mean to inſinuate, that the malignant criticiſms alluded to by Mr John Bell, were *always unjuſt*: I have no doubt that very often they were but too well founded. Indeed the very firſt piece of intelligence I got, with reſpect to the *operation*

tion of my former Memorial, and this within two days after it had been diſtributed, was, that two different individuals had at once applied to themſelves ſome of my general remarks, with reſpect to unſkilfulneſs, and bad ſucceſs in operations. Their conduct in ſo doing was raſh and imprudent with reſpect to themſelves, and uncandid with reſpect to me; who did not know of their misfortunes, and who, if I had known of them, would not have alluded to them: but certainly, their ready application of my remarks to themſelves, could neither be *unjuſt* nor *erroneous*. Having no direct knowledge of the perſons, characters, and events, to which I here allude, I cannot judge of the juſtneſs of an opinion, which I know has prevailed among ſeveral members of the Royal College of Surgeons; namely, that if it had not been for my unlucky remark, and the ſtill more unlucky application of it, there would have been no diſpute or lawſuit between the College as a body, and the Managers.

The parties in the College were very nearly balanced, fifteen of the Fellows being againſt, and fourteen for the Managers. If only one of thoſe who ſo unluckily took to himſelf, and reſented, my general remarks, had voted with our friends; which from certain conſiderations, of the validity of which I cannot judge, it was expected he would have done, we ſhould then have had fifteen to fourteen in our favour. If both thoſe gentlemen had voted with us, which however I believe was not juſt expected, on the principle of former connections and habits, we ſhould have had ſixteen to thirteen on our ſide, and conſequently no lawſuit with their Royal College.

Mr John Bell deſerves great credit, for the dexterity with which he has diſplayed his learning, and availed himſelf of the account that *Celſus* gives, of the age, the character, and the accompliſh-

ments of body and mind befitting a Surgeon; that he ſhould be young, ſtrong, and ſteady in his hand, ambidexter, with quick and ſharp ſight: but how it came to paſs, that Mr John Bell ventured to give the concluſion of that amiable character, as drawn by *Celſus*, it is difficult to conceive; unleſs it was, that he truſted to the quotation being given only in Latin, and not tranſlated for the benefit of his readers. I beg leave to ſupply this omiſſion, without taking the trouble to ſettle whether it was accidental or intended. The concluding part of that paſſage of Celſus quoted by Mr John Bell, relates to the mental accompliſhments and diſpoſition of a Surgeon, and is expreſſed in the following words; *animo intrepidus, immiſericors:* which literally tranſlated mean, in diſpoſition *fearleſs* and *mercileſs*. Theſe amiable peculiarities could do little or no harm, when Surgeons were merely employed to execute the directions of Phyſicians, not to judge for themſelves what was proper to be done; but they are not quite ſo indifferent in this age and country, wherein Surgeons are not ſervants or ſlaves, employed to execute the directions of a ſuperior or a maſter; but expected to be men of liberal education, ſentiments, and manners, and fit to judge as well as act for themſelves. But it is unneceſſary to diſcuſs this point very fully, the principles on which it is to be decided being obvious to all. If Mr John Bell and his clients can perſuade their countrymen at large, that it is for their good to entruſt their limbs and their lives to Surgeons of ſuch characters and accompliſhments, and to whole corporations or colleges of them promiſcuouſly, and by rotation, it would be a ſin to balk them. I ſhould only beg leave to tell them, what Frederick the Great King of Pruſſia told ſome of his ſubjects, who were like to tear one anothers eyes out in a diſpute about the eternity of hell-torments, and at laſt referred the controverſy to their Sovereign. His anſwer was ſhort and ſimple; "If my good ſubjects of Neuf-
"chatel are abſolutely reſolved to be damned to all eternity, I have
"no

" no objections." *(Si mes bons ſujets de Neufchatel veulent abſolument etre damnè eternellement, je n'y trouve rien à redire.)*

But as long as the good people of Scotland, when acting for themſelves and their families, take care to keep out of that purgatory which Mr John Bell ſo ſtrongly recommends to them, I ſee no right or pretenſions that they can have to put the ſick poor into it. As to all thoſe evils which Mr John Bell thinks he foreſees from the ſelection of a few Surgeons for the Hoſpital-duty, I can ſee no probability, nay ſcarce a poſſibility, of any one of them. Every Surgeon in Edinburgh, juſt as much as at preſent, will be at liberty, and in duty bound, to give every one of his apprentices as many and as minute inſtructions on every point in ſurgery, as he thinks fit; every one of thoſe apprentices will be entitled to attend the Hoſpital on the ſame terms as at preſent, to become acquainted with the caſe of every patient in it, and with the practical treatment of every caſe, and to ſee every operation that is performed. According to Mr John Bell's own doctrine, of the certainty of the principles and the uniformity of the practice of ſurgery, and the equal and perfect accompliſhments of every Surgeon who has the good fortune to be a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in this city, every ſuch apprentice will ſee every ſuch caſe treated as ſkilfully, and every operation performed as well as poſſible. I cannot for my heart conceive what more he would have for their ſake. Their education will be as complete in every reſpect, as it has hitherto been; and I ſee no reaſon to think that their numbers will be leſſened. As to the diſappointment which ſome Surgeons may feel at not being allowed to exhibit their ſkill and dexterity in this Hoſpital, as on a public ſtage, it does not appear to me a point that ought to intereſt either the Managers or the public. The very notion of it ſtrongly recalls to my memory a diſappointment which *William*, Dr Monro's purveyor, met with ſome twenty or five and twenty years ago, and lamented, in very

very pathetic terms, to the great entertainment of our late worthy Principal, Dr Robertſon. He declared, " It was the hardeſt caſe " in the world, after the Doctor" (for Dr Monro was always *the* Doctor) " had been at the expence of hiring a coach for him." The grievance was, that *William* was obliged to come back to Edinburgh without his agreeable though ſilent companion in a poſt-coach, who was actually under ſentence of hanging at Stirling, but moſt unluckily got a reprieve.

Mr John Bell is pleaſed to ſay, (Section 3. page 43.), " The " Memorialiſt never ſaw an operation; and we are at ſome loſs to " gueſs what an ignorant perſon may imagine to be the conſe- " quences of an ill-performed operation; but we, who have ſeen " many operations, both good and bad, have ſeen none of thoſe " *murders*, which the Memorialiſt has more than hinted at."

As to my never having ſeen an operation, that point has been fully diſcuſſed already (page 123. 6. of this Memorial). As to my having more than hinted at *murders* in my former Memorial, no ſuch hint or inſinuation is to be found in it from end to end. This is one of the many matters of fact, about which he has been almoſt uniformly unlucky. By *murder* is always meant killing a perſon willfully and deliberately. But ſurely nothing of this kind was ever ſuppoſed by me, nor is there one word or ſentence in my former Memorial that can bear ſuch a conſtruction. On the contrary, I had expreſsly, and in ſtrong terms, declared my belief, that all the Surgeons attending in the Hoſpital, whether equal or unequal in profeſſional knowledge, and manual dexterity as operators, did their beſt. My ſentence expreſſing this opinion, " It is not the *fault* of a youth of four and twenty, that he has not " all the uſeful knowledge, and manual dexterity, of an experien- " ced Surgeon of fifty years of age," (*Mem. page* 12.) muſt have been

been well known to Mr John Bell, for he has quoted it repeatedly in his Anſwer to me, and made ſome curious remarks on it; in ſubſtance amounting to an aſſertion, that *it is the fault* of ſuch a youth if he has not all theſe accompliſhments. My obſervations and arguments were avowedly and uniformly directed againſt the general badneſs of that ſyſtem of indiſcriminate attendance by rotation of all the Surgeons in Edinburgh, which expoſed the patients to ſo many evils and ſo great dangers: but I diſclaimed, expreſsly and ſtrongly, all thoughts of imputing even *blame*, not to ſay *murder*, to any one of them; or of propoſing any inquiry into particular misfortunes, ſuch as were known to have reſulted from that ſyſtem.

But let us conſider what is to be underſtood by Mr John Bell's aſſertion, that he had ſeen none of thoſe *murders;* only ſubſtituting, as Chriſtian charity ſeems to require, the more decent terms of *evils* or *misfortunes*, inſtead of the horrid expreſſion of *murders*. He acknowledges having ſeen many operations, both good and bad. Are we then to underſtand by his aſſertion, that all thoſe operations were abſolutely and indiſpenſably neceſſary, and could not have been prevented by more judicious and ſkilful treatment of the ſame caſes before they came to that laſt extremity? And are we to underſtand that all thoſe operations which he ſaw, both good and bad, were uniformly ſucceſsful? Such things may be aſſerted, but they cannot be believed. To ſuppoſe them even poſſible, is to ſuppoſe all the Surgeons of Edinburgh, not only equally ſkilful in the treatment of all chirurgical diſeaſes, and equally dexterous in the performance of all operations; but moreover to ſuppoſe them all as ſkilful, and as dexterous, as Surgeons can be. This I conceive to be more than Mr John Bell has maintained in his Pamphlet, or will chooſe to maintain at preſent; eſpecially with reſpect to that party, or *no* party, in their Royal College,

College, which has the wickedneſs to diſſent from him and his friends.

Beſides, it appears by ſome paſſages, already quoted from another of his works, that he had actually ſeen, and remembered, ſome of thoſe misfortunes to which I alluded, but which I never dreamed of regarding as *murders*. The horrid experiment, (quoted page 273, 4. of this Memorial), of leaving all the ſores of the patients in the Surgeons wards, for ſeveral days in the heat of ſummer, undreſſed, till they were all crawling with worms, was at leaſt an *evil;* but would have been no *murder*, if it had been fatal to them all. The conduct of a grand conſultation, in reverſing one day the deciſion of another conſultation only the day before, and *forcing* the attending Surgeon to cut off a limb, which it is plain he thought might have been ſaved, was another of thoſe evils: yet though the patient died of that operation, it cannot be conſidered as *murder*, becauſe it was not done with intention to kill. But with reſpect to the patients who loſe their lives, or their limbs, it is much the ſame whether thoſe evils are called misfortunes or murders: and it is equally the duty of the Managers, if it is in their power, to avert them from the patients in the Hoſpital.

Mr John Bell beſt knows whether he *ſaw* or even heard of any of thoſe *evils*, or what he calls *murders*, to which it was raſhly ſuppoſed that I had alluded in my former Memorial, by remarks which ſome gentlemen unluckily applied to themſelves, and others more wiſely, if not more candidly, applied to ſome of their profeſſional brethren. But I can at leaſt teſtify, that Mr John Bell was on one occaſion preſent, and very attentive, not at an operation, but at the opening of the body of a patient on whom I had directed an operation to be performed. The operation was in itſelf neither difficult nor dangerous; yet in that caſe it appeared *indiſputably*, that it had only been *attempted*, not *performed;* for that circumſtance

ſtance which is eſſential to the operation, and for the ſake of which the operation at that time was, and always is directed, had not been accompliſhed. Nay more, the attempt had been made ſo rudely and unſkilfully, that a gangrene was induced in the wounded part, of ſuch extent and depth, that it probably would have been fatal, if the patient had had no other diſeaſe. But, in this caſe, I fully acquit the operator of having been even the innocent cauſe of the patient's death; for it appeared plainly, on opening the body, that the patient's life could not have been ſaved: and I hope the Surgeon, who was ſo unfortunate on that occaſion, will have the candour to acquit me, of being either the murderer in that caſe, or the innocent cauſe of the patient's death, by directing that operation. I certainly ſhould not have done ſo, if I had known all that appeared ſo plainly after his death. I can only ſay, in my own vindication, that I wiſhed to give the patient every poſſible chance for his life; that there was no danger in the operation, ſuppoſing it rightly performed; and that in the caſe, of all I have ever had under my care, that approached the neareſt to that one, the patient had been ſaved by that very operation, when in circumſtances of the utmoſt danger; indeed in ſuch circumſtances, that I am confident her life could not have been ſaved by any other means. In that unfortunate caſe to which I allude, it was known to all the Students attending the Clinical Lectures, as well as to me, that the operation had not *ſucceeded*; and all of us were curious to know, whether there had been any preternatural impediment to the right and effectual performing of it, or whether the failure was to be regarded merely as a *misfortune*. On this account, and alſo becauſe the caſe was a very intereſting one, both in the Theory and Practice of Phyſic, for I know but of *one* ſimilar in the records of Medicine, an unuſually great number of Students attended in the operation-room to ſee the body opened; and all of them ſaw that there was no peculiar impedi-

ment to the operation intended; that it had *not* been performed, and had been very roughly and unſkilfully attempted. Therefore, though this is a *medical fact*, I conceive it is one that cannot be diſputed: and in particular, that it cannot be diſputed by Mr John Bell; who was not only preſent, and very attentive, at the opening of the body, but who even took, on the ſpot, a very ſufficient memorandum of it, which I dare ſay he has in his repoſitories at this hour; for the caſe was as intereſting in Surgery as in Phyſic. Moreover, I think it impoſſible that he ſhould have forgotten it, even at the time when he was writing his Anſwer to me; for I had mentioned it particularly in my long letter to him, (20th Auguſt 1800), with many additional circumſtances, which there is no occaſion to ſtate here. I even mentioned to him in that letter, the very pointed remark made upon it by Mr Chilver, a favourite pupil of Sir Walter Farquhar, and now an eminent Surgeon in London, who at that time attended my Clinical Lectures, and was at leaſt as much aſtoniſhed as I was at the failure of the operation which I had directed.

Such an example explains and illuſtrates, better than any general obſervations can do, what I wiſhed to inculcate in my former Memorial. Relative to the Surgeon and the patient who were concerned in it, it was to be regarded merely as a misfortune; but as relative to the general ſyſtem, which expoſed patients to ſuch misfortunes, it was a proof of great badneſs; and of a fault in the Managers of the Hoſpital, if they allowed ſuch a ſyſtem to continue, without uſing their utmoſt endeavours to get it aboliſhed. It can ſcarce be neceſſary to point out, that if a patient's ſituation had been ſuch, that his life might have been ſaved by that operation rightly performed, he would have loſt that chance for his life, and would have been expoſed to new and great danger, I mean from the mortification, by the unſkilfulneſs of the operator. Nor is it very unreaſonable, or uncharitable, to ſuppoſe, that an

operator,

operator, who was ſo unfortunate in a ſimple and eaſy operation, might be almoſt as unfortunate in thoſe that are confeſſedly more difficult and dangerous. I have no doubt that he would profit by that misfortune, and would ſtudy the operation carefully, and learn to do it well, and actually perform it with complete ſucceſs on the next patient on whom he had occaſion to try it. Such I conceive to be a ſpecimen of the improvement which Deacon Kennedy and his friends expected that young Surgeons were to acquire by practiſing in the Hoſpital: but I can conceive no right on the part of the Managers to make the patients in the Hoſpital the victims of ſuch improvement; or any excuſe for them if they do ſo, when they can get ſkilful and experienced Surgeons to do the Hoſpital-duty.

It ſurely required the utmoſt exertion of Mr John Bell's ſuperior genius to diſcover, that, in the paſſage which he has *fairly* quoted from my Memorial, I had *threatened*, or, as he inſinuates, had done worſe than threatened, the oldeſt of the young Surgeons, or any other body. To *threaten*, means to denounce evil to a perſon, in order to deter him from doing ſomething that is diſagreeable to the perſon threatening, or to terrify him, ſo as to make him do ſomething which that perſon wiſhes. But I, far from denouncing any evil to the oldeſt of the young Surgeons, or to any other body; far from endeavouring to terrify any perſon into doing what he did not chooſe, or endeavouring to deter any perſon from doing what he did chooſe; had very modeſtly expreſſed my humble hope, that the formidable Janus-headed Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; might perform his office on me; and had declared, that I ſhould conſider it as a very great honour, and a particular favour. This declaration could not be diſtruſted; for I mentioned, explicitly and honeſtly, the reaſon for which I

was ambitious of that honour and favour; namely, that it would complete the evidence of all that I wiſh to eſtabliſh, and give to the Managers of the Infirmary, and to the public, a juſt notion of the inveterate rancour of medical warfare. In this reſpect at leaſt I have not been diſappointed; for if the ſpecimens which in my former Memorial I gave them of medical warfare, and if the writings that bear the name of Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; to which I referred them, did not fully convince them of all that I wiſhed them to know, Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me muſt have been more than ſufficient to give them a juſt notion of medical controverſy, and even ſome inſight into a part of human nature, which otherwiſe they could have had no opportunity, and no wiſh to explore. In one kind of inveteracy, I admit, that controverſial Divines ſurpaſs the moſt ſpirited of medical diſputants: but in moſt, or all other reſpects, I conceive that Mr John Bell's pamphlet is equal to any thing that has appeared in theological controverſy, from Saint Origen to Dr Prieſtley incluſive; and far beyond any thing that is to be met with in the writings of our keeneſt medical diſputants.

It is eaſy, and it is worth while, to point out the general and moſt obvious cauſes of the inveteracy of medical diſputes and medical diſputants. The beginning of almoſt every medical diſpute is ſome diſcovery or improvement, or pretended diſcovery and improvement, which ſome perſon of the medical profeſſion conceives that he has made, and wiſhes to promulgate to the world. Even in *pure ſcience*, ſuch diſcoveries and improvements are often regarded with jealouſy and envy by others engaged in the cultivation of the ſame ſciences. They are mortifying to the pride of thoſe who did not make them, and are conſidered as arrogant claims to ſuperior talents and knowledge in the authors of them. Of ſuch controverſies, even within my memory, there have been ſome ſtriking examples in the ſciences of chemiſtry, of politics,

politics, and of metaphyſics. But phyſic and ſurgery are not *pure ſciences:* they are *trades* or *crafts*, by which thoſe who profeſs them muſt live. Of the numberleſs corrections and refutations, real or pretended, of old opinions and practices, and of the numberleſs new diſcoveries and improvements, real or pretended, which from time to time have been publiſhed to the world, a very large proportion has evidently been intended to ſerve the purpoſe of the *craft*, by increaſing the *trade* of thoſe who propoſed them, rather than to improve the ſtate and to extend the limits of the ſcience. That ſuch is the caſe with the newſpaper advertiſements, and all kind of quack bills, and many little publications, in favour of particular medicines and practices, is well and generally known; and it is equally true, though not ſo generally known, that the caſe often has been, and to this day often is, the ſame, with many publications which appear in the form of handſome octavo or large quarto volumes. In the beſt of theſe there is generally much credulity, and ſtrong and glaring partiality to certain opinions and practices; but in many of them there is even great diſingenuity, in ſuppreſſing what the authors muſt have known to be true, and aſſerting what they muſt have known to be falſe. Nor is this kind of diſingenuity confined to thoſe who begin the attack; I mean to the authors of real or pretended diſcoveries and improvements. Some of theſe, pretty far advanced in life, and long eſtabliſhed in practice, have been juſt as long the profeſſional rivals, and often the bitter perſonal enemies, of their brethren and cotemporaries. Others of them are young men, not yet known to the world; but eager to become ſo, and to ſhow the world how far ſuperior they are to their elder brethren in talents and profeſſional knowledge, and how far more worthy of public eſteem and confidence, and of great and lucrative employment.

Thoſe who are attacked on this very tender point, cannot be expected to be much more candid and impartial than thoſe who attack

tack them. Phyſicians and Surgeons depend, not only for proſperity in their profeſſions, but for their daily bread, on their profeſſional character; which is neceſſarily eſtimated by a kind of compariſon, always invidious, with the character of their brethren. If any of them were to admit the claims of their aſſuming brethren, whether their cotemporaries or juniors, to ſuperior ſkill and knowledge, it would be almoſt equivalent to giving all that they had to their moſt hated rivals and bittereſt enemies. Profeſſional character is to a Phyſician or Surgeon, what a tongue is to a lawyer, fingers to a fiddler, or feet to a dancing-maſter: it is his landed eſtate, his bank-ſtock, his India bonds, his 3 per cent. conſols, his ſkill in jockeyſhip, his ſeat in parliament, his knowledge of play, his ſcrip, his omnium; and he muſt fight for it to the laſt. If only half a quarter of a yard were ſnipped off from the point of a lawyer's tongue, every time that he undertook a bad cauſe, or employed a bad argument in maintaining a good one, the world would ſoon hear ſuch an outcry as never yet was heard; and I have no doubt that the gentlemen of the long robe, who have long been accuſtomed to diſpute and wrangle with one another all their days, with great candour and good humour, would ſoon become as illiberal and inveterate in their diſputes as the worſt of my brethren. Medical diſputants are but men, neither better nor worſe than other men; but placed in very trying and unfavourable circumſtances. Of this many of the Medical Profeſſion have been ſo well convinced, that no temptation, or provocation, could ever induce them to engage in a medical controverſy.

Some of our medical diſputants have really been men of talents, of ſcience, of wit: and have had all the advantages which a liberal and learned education could give them: ſo that it is not ſurpriſing that their controverſial writings have been juſt and ſevere, as well as acute, lively, and entertaining. But unfortunately many more of our diſputants, who had none of theſe advantages, have been

pleaſed

pleaſed to take it into what they call their heads, that they poſſeſs them all in the higheſt degree. To this unlucky miſtake we owe an infinite number of volumes, the hundredth part of which would be much more than ſufficient to give all mankind a ſurfeit of our writings and our controverſies.

It is unneceſſary here to give any ſpecimens of what every perſon of taſte and judgment muſt acknowledge to be vile and deteſtable in medical controverſy. But I ſhall give, from the writings of our celebrated countryman *Dr Pitcairn*, one little ſpecimen of the ſpirit, the inveteracy, the contempt, and even the ribaldry and abuſe, with which a keen medical diſputant can treat his opponent.

Aſtruc, a famous French phyſician near a hundred years ago, had got into a diſpute about the circulation of the blood, ſome things relating to which he either could not or would not underſtand. He ſeems even to have gone ſo far wrong, as to admit that the fibres of the cavities of the heart might contract, but yet to deny that by ſuch contraction they could compreſs, or propel, the blood contained in thoſe cavities. To ſuch a hereſy *Pitcairn* could give no quarter; and, though perfectly able for the taſk himſelf, gravely aſked the opinion of the Profeſſor of Mathematics in the Univerſity of Edinburgh with reſpect to it; a James Gregory, not one of my dynaſty, but one of the three brothers of the collateral dynaſty. He, on conſidering *Aſtruc's* argument, pronounced with confidence, as well he might, that if a circular fibre ſurrounding a cavity, contracted, not only it muſt compreſs whatever was contained in that cavity; but that, if it contracted to half its original length, it muſt compreſs whatever was between it and the centre of the cavity into the fourth part of its former ſpace. Not content with this ſchooling, he proceeds to give a burleſque demonſtration of *Aſtruc's* doctrine, but good enough, as he thought, for *Aſtruc*.

This,

This, it might have been thought, would have ſatisfied the keeneſt diſputant: but it did not ſatisfy *Pitcairn*, who thought it neceſſary to adminiſter ſome farther flagellation to *Aſtruc*, in his own peculiar ſtyle; and accordingly, after quoting the words of my nameſake, thus proceeds.

" *Hæc meus Gregorius.*

Ego libellum Aſtrucii non vocem Annales Voluſi, ſive cacatam chartam, quia mihi videtur Aſtrucius *nunquam cacaſſe, alioquin ſenſiſſet muſculos abdominis et ſe contrahere, et alia exprimere poſſe.*"

Happily it is impoſſible to tranſlate *Pitcairn*'s ſentence: but every perſon who underſtands the language and the alluſion of it, muſt be ſenſible that it is impoſſible to eſtimate more contemptuouſly the talents and knowledge of an adverſary. But thoſe medical diſputants, who naturally burn with a deſire to emulate what they cannot fail to admire, and who have really the fineſt talents for blackguard abuſe, may be aſſured that it is in vain for them to expect the ſame admiration of their ribaldry, unleſs it comes adorned, recommended, and enforced, by ſome portion of that acuteneſs, and ſound reaſoning, and real wit, which *Pitcairn* diſplayed. (See the Prefatory Epiſtle to *Pitcarnii Diſſertationes Medicæ*, 4to Edin. edition, 1713).

Suppoſing, however contrary to the plain meaning of words as plain as any in the Engliſh language, that my innocent compliment to Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; was *bona fide* a threat, and by me intended as ſuch, if not as ſomething worſe, a ſtill greater difficulty and ſubject of aſtoniſhment remains, namely, how ſuch a compliment, or threat, to Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq; can be a threat to the oldeſt of the young Surgeons.

The firſt ſtep in this moſt intereſting inquiry is, to aſcertain who is the oldeſt of the young Surgeons. Happily for all concerned,

cerned, Mr John Bell has had the goodneſs to give us great aſſiſtance on this point. In the very beginning of his pamphlet, or what may be reckoned a preface and introduction to it, he tells us, that " the following requeſt was preſented to Mr Bell, as the " oldeſt of the Junior Surgeons." Every body muſt be ſenſible of his great delicacy in attributing to that accidental circumſtance alone, the very honourable compliment that one party of his brethren paid him, in requeſting him to draw up an Anſwer to my Memorial. This mode of ſtating the fact muſt certainly be attributed to his extraordinary modeſty; for every perſon but himſelf would have ſaid without heſitation, that he was employed by his party to write for them, not in conſideration of his being the oldeſt of the Junior Surgeons, but in conſideration of the undiſputed ſuperiority of his talents, and his great and acknowledged merit as a controverſial writer. Indeed ſome evil-minded perſons went ſo far as to ſay, that he was the only one of the party who could write; but this muſt not be underſtood literally. All that I can underſtand or believe on that point is, that none of his party could have written nearly ſo well as he has done, or would have been truſted by the party to write for them, on an occaſion at once ſo delicate and ſo important.

Whatever may be thought of theſe ſpeculations, it muſt at leaſt remain certain, either that Mr John Bell, the oldeſt of the young Surgeons, is Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſquire, or at leaſt that he wiſhes to be thought ſo. The latter ſuppoſition being unfavourable to Mr John Bell, as implying a wiſh on his part to have the credit of writings not his own, but very generally and juſtly admired, may be ſet aſide at once, without any minute examination. We have then to conſider only the other part of the alternative, that he really is, as his words imply, the author of thoſe admirable works which bear the name of Jonathan Dawplucker. On conſidering again and again his words, in the very intereſting

marginal note at preſent under review, I cannot perceive that he has made any diſtinction between the two publications which equally bear that formidable name. Are we then to conſider him as the author of them both? or will he in due time, and in his own way, favour the world with a luminous commentary on his own text? This I conceive will at leaſt be acceptable to the world, and will even be wanted for the inſtruction and conviction of many well-meaning but dull plodding people, who do not underſtand men of genius and their ways, and always inſiſt upon judging them by common rules. There is no doubt ſomething very engaging in that kind of myſtery and coquetry which Mr John Bell has ſo artfully employed, in half ſhowing half concealing that he is the great Jonathan Dawplucker; *et fugit ad ſalices et ſe cupit ante videri.* Many readers will always be gratified by finding ſomething left to their own genius, imagination, and induſtry: they muſt no doubt conſider it as a compliment to their ſagacity, to get but a hint, a pretty broad one, I muſt confeſs, in the preſent inſtance, and to be allowed to find out the reſt for themſelves. Poſſibly too Mr John Bell has had ſome other reaſons for not chooſing to ſay explicitly that he was the writer of all or even of ſome of thoſe works which bear the name of Jonathan Dawplucker. But if he will only conſider how wofully his readers and admirers muſt be puzzled and bewildered by his reſerve and obſcurity on that intereſting point, I truſt he will have pity on them, and put an end to their doubts and their pain, by enlightening their underſtanding. This ſurely he can beſt do, *diem qui promit et celat, aliuſque et idem naſcitur.*

The chief difficulty that many of them feel, is to conceive how any man, not furiouſly inſane, ſhould attack, and diſſect, and anatomiſe himſelf, with ſuch unrelenting inveteracy, as Mr John Bell has diſplayed in both thoſe works to which I allude. It is a common opinion, but a very groſs miſtake, that it is only in the firſt

of

of Jonathan Dawplucker's works that Mr John Bell is ſo roughly handled. The ſame inveteracy againſt him appears in the ſecond of them, even in the dedication of it to Mr Benjamin Bell; which appears to have been moſt unaccountably overlooked: For example, "When this bloody-minded man troubled the College, (of which "you very naturally conſider yourſelf and your copartners as con- "ſtituting a majority, or at leaſt a quorum, *tres faciunt collegium)*; "when he began to diſturb the College with his johnbellations, "why did you not let him go on quietly? I can aſſure you he "is no more fit than yourſelf to inſtitute a literary ſociety, and "far leſs to create one out of nothing! You ſhould have let "him "Go on," and left it to me to ſhow how much he is a "dunce in ſcience, a pretender in anatomy, a puppy in ſurgery, "and a plagiariſt in every thing. Was it wiſely done to ſet your "Hall on fire, in order to drive out a few vermin? He and thoſe "who have joined him are a ſet of ſelf-ſufficient ignorant boys, "not equal beſides in number to the partners of your own firm. "If they have contradicted you, it muſt have been from mere "conceit, vanity, and idleneſs! "They are idle, they are idle, "and therefore do they ſay, Let us go to ſacrifice to our gods."" This, to the beſt of my judgment, is juſt the ſum and ſubſtance of what is contained in the firſt of Jonathan Dawplucker's pamphlets.

I already hinted, that it is a vulgar error, to attempt to eſtimate men of genius, and their actions, by common rules. Certainly no man but one of ſuperior genius would have thought of acquiring diſtinction, and of recommending himſelf to the favour and confidence of the public, by ſuch an unmerciful diſſection of himſelf, as that one of Mr John Bell contained in the pamphlet, which explains, with ſuch acuteneſs and logical accuracy, the whole craft and myſtery, and all the *genera* and *ſpecies*, of the great and new art of johnbellation. I muſt own I think there was a degree of vanity in giving it this name, not quite conſiſtent with his exemplary

modeſty on all other occaſions. Perhaps he thought his great candour, and perfect veracity in all that he ſaid with reſpect to himſelf, might excuſe that appearance of vanity, in endeavouring by ſuch an innocent expedient to make his name immortal. It muſt be obſerved, that this mode of attracting notice, and gaining eſteem and confidence, though uncommon, is not abſolutely without example even in this age and country. Within my memory a famous popular preacher ſoon gained the eſteem and confidence of his congregation, by telling them, from the pulpit, that from his youth upwards he had been ſadly addicted to lying. It was evidently impoſſible for ſuch a man to fail in his attempt: if his hearers were not ſtocks or ſtones, they muſt have believed and eſteemed him.

In ſome other countries it has been the practice, time immemorial, for certain individuals of ſuperior genius, to raiſe themſelves to eminence, and to acquire great influence over their countrymen, by inflicting on their own perſons the moſt unmerciful torments, by way of penance. Thus, in Hindoſtan, they reckon at leaſt a millon and a half, ſome ſay two millions, of ſuch fellows, whom they call Faquirs. I remember to have read of one of theſe worthies, who became a very great man by the ſimple expedient of driving ten-penny nails into his breech. I do not wiſh here to make or to inſinuate any malicious compariſons: I take it for granted, that not one in fifty of thoſe ſelf-tormenting Faquirs is equal, or nearly equal, in genius to Mr John Bell: yet ſurely even the dulleſt of them may be reckoned infinitely ſuperior in talents to the ſimple Hindoos who believe in them. Every body knows, that in Popiſh countries, to this day, many people acquire the reputation of ſuperior ſanctity, and are even ſuppoſed to obtain miraculous powers, by the unceaſing penances which they perform. I know not how early this practice began in the Chriſtian Church: but certainly as early as the third century it was well underſtood.

Early

Early in that century the great Saint Origen flouriſhed: and though, by his ſuperior genius, and his unparalleled inveteracy in diſputes, and his being a little crack-brained, he muſt eaſily have been at the head of one party in the church; yet not content with that kind of greatneſs, by employing a well-judged penance on his own perſon, he acquired at once unrivalled eminence. Underſtanding, or pretending to underſtand, literally, a certain text of Scripture, (Matth. xix. 12.), which the moſt orthodox divines of all Chriſtian churches have agreed in conſidering as metaphorical, he performed on his own perſon a little chirurgical operation, a mere ſcratch, a flea-bite, in compariſon of the terrible diſſecting and anatomiſing which Mr John Bell, under the borrowed name of Jonathan Dawplucker, has performed on himſelf: and ſo well did he ſucceed by it, that his reward was great as his utmoſt wiſh. He had the pleaſure of living in perpetual warfare with all his brethren, and at laſt of receiving the crown of martyrdom; nay, to this day, his writings are often quoted by keen theological diſputants. *Omne tulit punctum.* If Mr John Bell really wiſhes to be regarded as the Saint Origen of medical diſputants, which, from the marginal note in his Anſwer to me, and the whole tenor of the firſt, and the dedication of the ſecond of Jonathan Dawplucker's pamphlets, ſeems to be the caſe, no body can have any objections: but if that be not his meaning, and if all thoſe writings, and notes, and hints, are to be regarded only as a Harlequinade, I humbly think it is almoſt time that he ſhould make an end of that cruel ſelf-diſſection, and put himſelf neatly together again, *ſecundum artem;* for I am ſure that many of his beſt friends muſt long have been in pain for him. Very little will be wanted to accompliſh this healing proceſs: nothing more or leſs, but juſt to ſhow that the quotations from his own writings given as true in Jonathan Dawplucker's firſt pamphlet, and by the malevolent vulgar believed to be ſo, are all falſe, as well as the

ſhort

ſhort and pithy character given of himſelf in the dedication of Dawplucker's ſecond pamphlet. This I am ſure it will be as eaſy for him to do, as to ſhow that thoſe quotations from my Memorial are fair and true, with which he has ſo liberally favoured the world.

I muſt not deprive Mr John Bellof the pleaſure of knowing that he ſucceeded perfectly in *quizzing* me, by what he had hinted of the attacks made on his character, and of what he had done in ſelf-defence. Not ſuſpecting that there could be any trick or deceit in that part of his letter, printed page 35. of this Memorial, I *bona fide* applied to ſeveral bookſellers for a copy of his defence, or anſwer to the pamphlet of Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſquire: but none of them had ever ſeen or heard of ſuch a defence or anſwer, ſo that I am well convinced none ſuch ever was publiſhed. What is very curious, moſt or all of them mentioned to me Jonathan Dawplucker's ſecond pamphlet, as what they underſtood to be Mr John Bell's defence or anſwer to the firſt. But that muſt have been a miſtake; for, in the firſt place, it contains (as already quoted, page 299.) inſtead of a contradiction or refutation, a brief recapitulation and enforcement of every thing unfavourable to Mr John Bell, which had been ſaid of him in Dawplucker's firſt Pamphlet: and in the ſecond place, the whole body of the Pamphlet is filled with the moſt virulent abuſe of Mr Benjamin Bell; which I conceive to be well merited, and well beſtowed on the ſaid Benjamin Bell, as being a kind of income-tax, more equitably aſſeſſed, and more rigorouſly exacted, than ever Mr Pitt's was. It is indeed ſo fair and reaſonable a tax, that I think he ought to pay it without murmuring, every year, as long as he lives.

I muſt alſo do Mr John Bell the juſtice to ſay, that he has ſhown himſelf thoroughly maſter of the Engliſh language, by the very perfect manner in which he has diſguiſed his own peculiar ſtyle, and aſſumed one diametrically oppoſite to it, in the former of the

two

two Pamphlets publiſhed under the borrowed name of Jonathan Dawplucker. In moſt or all of his other works, he writes with peculiar eaſe and elegance; in every page, and in almoſt every ſentence, ſnatching a grace beyond the reach of art. But in Jonathan Dawplucker's firſt pamphlet no ſuch grace or elegance can be perceived: it is evident in the whole of it,

That rules as ſtrict his labour'd work confine,
As if the Stagyrite o'erlook'd each line.

I doubt whether there be in the whole of it the ſmalleſt deviation from the vulgar rules of grammar: and certainly the whole of it is written with a degree of dryneſs, little if at all inferior to that of Gulliver's Travels, or Swift's Advice to the people of Ireland to eat their own children. That dry ſtyle has at different times been in faſhion; as for example, in England about one hundred, and in Rome about eighteen hundred years ago; and in Athens for ſome hundred years before. Some readers as well as writers of bad taſte have affected to admire it greatly, and have called it claſſical: but it has always ſoon gone into diſrepute, and been reprobated by the general voice of mankind; who never fail to tire of it, and to be delighted with the very oppoſite ſtyle, ſuch as Mr John Bell has employed in his Anſwer to me. If this Anſwer had been written in the ſame dry ſtyle with Jonathan Dawplucker's firſt pamphlet, the ſtudying and diſſecting of it, inſtead of being an agreeable amuſement, would have been to me an irkſome and inſupportable labour.

Towards the concluſion of his pamphlet, (ſection 3. p. 49. and 50.) Mr John Bell takes his leave of me, in a ſtrain of the moſt animated eloquence; to which it would be doing great injuſtice

juſtice were I to give only a few ſentences or extracts from it, by way of ſample. I ſhall therefore tranſcribe it *verbatim et literatim*, not forgetting the marginal notes with which it is enriched and adorned: for theſe notes are of equal authority with the text, and contain matters much more intereſting even than the text itſelf. I put, as on a former occaſion, numbers on the margin of this long quotation, for the ſake of preciſe reference to the ſeveral parts of it, conſidered in their proper connection with the whole.

" Of the Memorialiſt we ſhall alſo take our leave, though in " terms leſs fervent or reſpectful. The ceremonial of taking leave " muſt be complied with: his talents, his profeſſional reputation, his " literary atchievements, his ſtation in the Univerſity, require all " due obſervance. " His genius for quarrelling with his profeſ- " ſional brethren" is the natural ſubject of our valedictory ad- " dreſs; the ſhare of this very peculiar talent which he has " been pleaſed to beſtow on us and our private matters, enſures " to him this laſt mark of our regard.

" Conſcious that he had ſaid ſuch things as young men of ſpi- " rit could never endure, he has taken precautions not unworthy " of his genius; and tried, by a curious anticipation, to take off " the effect of our juſt reproaches."

To this part of his text is ſubjoined the following marginal note; the firſt lines of which are a faithful tranſcript from my own Memorial, and the laſt lines contain his very intereſting obſervation on my words.

" *Perhaps the formidable Janus-headed Jonathan Dawplucker, Eſq;* " *notwithſtanding his former kindneſs to me, and all the civil and kind* " *things which I have ſaid of him and his books, will officiate as high* " *prieſt, and from his two mouths will thunder forth the direful ſen-* " *tence, and with his own four hands begin the ſacrifice, by plucking* " *me as bare as a fiſh. This I ſhall conſider as a very great honour,* " *and a particular favour; for it will complete the evidence of all*

" *that*

" *that I wiſh to eſtabliſh, and give to the Managers of this Infirmary,* " *and to the Public, a juſt notion of the inveterate rancour of medical* " *hatred.*" Theſe are the terms in which the Memorialiſt threa- " tens (not to uſe any coarſer expreſſion), the OLDEST OF THE " YOUNG SURGEONS, whoſe natural duty it was to ſtand forward " in the general cauſe." His text then proceeds as follows:

" The public and avowed diſapprobation of a whole college, " he has imputed to the reſentment of one man, who, though he " once ſtood forth in ſelf-defence when his own reputation was " attacked by anonymous pamphlets, had no quarrel with the Me- " morialiſt, whom he never feared nor hated! nor hates nor " fears.

" Our Memorialiſt, ill contented with this great exertion of his " peculiar talent! ſenſible of an imperfection in his work, while he " has attained only to a general quarrel, faſtens his quarrel at laſt " on this perſon, and perſecutes him with ſuch praiſe as his nature " will allow him to beſtow. He calls him the head of our party! " a cunning compliment; he calls him the Junius and the Janus " of medical literature! an ironical compliment; he deſcribes " him as the moſt turbulent man of a turbulent ſociety! a ſelfiſh " compliment; ſince it reminds us of that boaſted accompliſhment " in which the Memorialiſt himſelf never was excelled, and recals " the memory of his own quarrels, numberleſs and nameleſs, " Lordly †, Literary, and Obſtetrical! Metaphyſical, Polemical, " Surgical, and Moral too! for how can ſuch a man, when he " quarrels with all good men, eſcape quarrelling ſometimes " on a " moral cauſe!" But we leave the unwearied Memorialiſt to com- " plete the work he delights in, and finiſh the particular quarrel " he has ſo happily begun." Subjoined to this paſſage, by a mark of reference at the word *Lordly*, is the following marginal note. " The Memorialiſt inſinuates, that his quarrels are only pro-

 " feſſional

" feſſional quarrels; but tho' he cajoles the Bar, he quarrels with " the Bench."

The latter part of this ſhort note, " tho' he cajoles the bar, he quarrels with the bench," I have not the honour to underſtand; and therefore I ſhall not attempt to make any particular obſervations on it. The former part of the note, about my *inſinuating* that my quarrels are only *profeſſional* quarrels, I underſtand perfectly, and admire greatly. It is equal to almoſt any of the ſpecimens hitherto conſidered, of Mr John Bell's talents as an orator and a lawyer. As it related to a *matter of fact*, which muſt have been perfectly well known to him, his uſual bad luck with reſpect to all ſuch matters of courſe attended him in the ſtating of it. Far from having ever inſinuated, or ſaid, or thought, that my quarrels were only profeſſional quarrels, I had expreſſed fully, and in the ſtrongeſt poſſible terms, the direct contrary; and had even mentioned my reaſons for having carefully avoided all profeſſional quarrels. Of theſe truths, every perſon may convince himſelf at once, by peruſing the 222d and 223d pages of my former Memorial. There is peculiar merit in Mr John Bell's mode of ſtating that fact; for it appears from his own Pamphlet, (Section 1ſt, page 40th), that he had read and underſtood that part of my Memorial: nay, he has even quoted *fairly* my own words, expreſſing, that without even the pretence of any difference in medical opinions, and purely on account of certain differences in morality, I had quarrelled irreconcileably with ſome of my brethren, and refuſed ever again to conſult with them.

Theſe things being abundantly well known, I thought it right, in my former Memorial, to mention, briefly and generally, what had been the nature and ſubject of thoſe quarrels in which I had been engaged; as I was almoſt certain that they would be miſrepreſented, and that I ſhould be reproached with them, as if they had been profeſſional diſputes or quarrels; of which, as occurring in others,

others, I had occaſion, for the purpoſes of my former Memorial, to give ſome account, and to expreſs my abhorrence and contempt. But though I regard *medical quarrels* as ridiculous and diſgraceful, I conceive that there may be ſuch immoralities in the conduct of Phyſicians or Surgeons, that their profeſſional Brethren may not only be juſtified in renouncing all intercourſe with them, but can ſcarce be juſtified if they do not act in this deciſive manner.

It is difficult even to gueſs, what purpoſe Mr John Bell's determined miſrepreſentation of my meaning and of my words is intended to ſerve. I do not ſee that he attempts to make any uſe of it; and I therefore conſider it as introduced only to diſplay his own peculiar talents: juſt like the ſpirited Voluntary, totally unconnected with every part of the Church ſervice, which an expert organiſt performs to amuſe a congregation, and ſhew his own powers of compoſition and execution. There are ſeveral other *voluntaries*, ſeemingly of the ſame kind, in Mr John Bell's anſwer to me: ſome of which have been already conſidered. One more of them, as a matter of curioſity, deſerves to be pointed out. In his 2d ſection, page 21, line 24, he is pleaſed to ſay: " And our memorialiſt has " been ſo unwiſe as to repeat the lines, *Non facile emergunt quorum* " *virtutibus obſtat res anguſta domi.* It is of us he ſpeaks: we thank " him for the compliment, and ſhall ſtrive to do away the re- " proach."

Mr John Bell's uſual bad luck with reſpect to all matters of fact has attended him on this occaſion. In my former Memorial I had *not repeated* (nor *quoted*, which, I preſume, is what he means by *repeated*) that well known paſſage of one of Juvenal's Satires; nor even one word of it: as he muſt have known perfectly. It is therefore himſelf alone, not me, that he and his clients have to thank both for the compliment and the reproach to themſelves, which he pretends to diſcover in thoſe words of the Roman Satiriſt. But, for my part, I muſt own that I am ſo dull, that, even with the

help of his very broad hint, I can perceive neither reproach, nor compliment, nor any the moſt diſtant alluſion to Mr John Bell or his clients in that paſſage of Juvenal's third ſatire, which he, not I, has quoted.

The only paſſage, in my former Memorial, that I can think of, which can be ſuppoſed to have recalled to any perſon's memory Juvenal's ſentiment, though certainly it expreſſes a very different thought, is the following ſentence: "Modeſt merit, from unfavourable cir-" cumſtances, may pine, from youth to age, in obſcurity, con-" tempt, and poverty." But ſurely even this paſſage neither is, nor can it be conſtrued to be, either a reproach, or a compliment, or any kind of alluſion to Mr John Bell and his clients. I am ſure when I wrote it I was not thinking either of him or of them: nor can I well conceive how any human ſkull can be ſo roomy as to receive and accommodate at once ſuch incongruous and diſcordant thoughts. I can ſcarce think that he himſelf, or that any of them, ſhould ſuppoſe, and I am ſure at leaſt that no other body could ſuppoſe, that I meant to ſay, that *res anguſta domi* always or generally made a perſon unſucceſsful in any branch of the medical profeſſion: for it is too notorious to require any proof, that very few indeed, certainly not one in a hundred, of Phyſicians or Surgeons, have attained eminence and affluence, or even independence and comfort, by their reſpective profeſſions, who had not poverty at firſt to force them to perſevering exertions. As little ſurely can it be ſuppoſed that I meant to ſay, that *modeſt merit* precluded ſucceſs in phyſic or ſurgery; or that none were unſucceſsful but men of *modeſt merit*. I had ſtrongly expreſſed my belief, that the moſt eminent Surgeons in Edinburgh, who enjoyed the greateſt ſhare of public eſteem and confidence, and had been the moſt ſucceſsful in their profeſſion, were really men of merit, probably of the greateſt merit, and well entitled to that high eſtimation which they had attained. So ſtrongly had I expreſſed this opinion, as thereby to give offence to

Mr

Mr John Bell, who, in his Anſwer to me, has made ſome curious but pretty ſevere animadverſions on it: For example, in the 36th page of his ſecond ſection, where having taken occaſion to mention, but without naming them, " the three firſt Surgeons of the " city," he adds this ſhort and pithy commentary: " Superior " to us, not in profeſſional acquirements, but in that accumu- " lation of the gains and emoluments of our profeſſion, which is " ſo often obtained by means which good men deſpiſe."—*At, at; hoc illud eſt; hinc illæ lachrymæ; hæc illa eſt miſericordia.*—As to any ſuppoſition, that I meant to ſay or inſinuate that none were unſucceſsful but men of *modeſt merit*, it is, in the firſt place, too abſurd to need any diſcuſſion; and, in the ſecond place, it is directly repugnant to matter of fact. In every city, and within my memory repeatedly in this city, there have been inſtances, ſo well known, that it would be equally needleſs and indelicate to mention them particularly, of men, whoſe character was juſt the reverſe of *modeſt merit*, who yet were completely unſucceſsful as Surgeons. I have no doubt that Mr John Bell, even from this very general deſcription, could eaſily name one of the individuals to whom I allude; a man whoſe life and death were ſo remarkable and inſtructive that they ſhould never be forgotten: were it only, that all who imitate his conduct may be warned by his example.

I cannot gueſs what Mr John Bell means by my *lordly* quarrels; for, to the beſt of my remembrance, I never had the honour of any quarrel with any Lord; nor do I know what he means by my *polemical* quarrels. Polemical quarrels, or controverſies, or diſputes, ſeem to me to be ſomewhat like wooden timber, vegetable graſs, or marine ſeas: Controverſial and polemical, the one originally a Latin, the other a Greek word, I take to mean the ſame thing. My literary and metaphyſical quarrels muſt anſwer for themſelves. I can gueſs what he means by my *obſtetrical* quarrels: but certainly his expreſſion could never convey to one, not already

already acquainted with the fact to which he alludes, any the ſmalleſt notion of what it was; on the contrary, his brief expreſſion would convey a totally different meaning, and one abundantly abſurd and diſgraceful to me. Any perſon, informed that I had been engaged in an obſtetrical quarrel, would certainly underſtand, that I had differed in opinion on ſome point in Midwifery from ſome practitioner of that noble art; and that this difference in opinion had become a violent diſpute or controverſy, and at laſt an open quarrel; which certainly would have been completely ridiculous in me. But it is well known to thouſands, and to no body better than to Mr John Bell himſelf, that the only quarrel of mine, to which in the paſſage quoted he can allude, bore no relation whatever to any opinion or practice in Midwifery, and was purely on a moral cauſe. It was indeed with a Knight of the noble order of the Crotchet; but that ſurely could no more entitle it to be called an obſtetrical quarrel, than a diſpute with a clergyman or a lawyer, a ſoldier or a merchant, is entitled to be called a theological or a legal, a mercantile or a military quarrel. The ſubject of it was a knaviſh pamphlet, publiſhed under a falſe name; and plainly intended to promote the pecuniary intereſt of one man, and to injure the fame and fortune of another, both of them my colleagues in this Univerſity. From an accidental, but very ſtriking combination of circumſtances, I was led to believe that I could completely detect, and bring to condign puniſhment, the author of that vile piece of knavery: and this I thought the honour and intereſt of the Univerſity required to be done. Though baffled in this attempt, and even in the preliminary ſtep towards it, the prevailing on my colleagues of the Univerſity to engage in that enquiry, I was abundantly ſucceſsful in another attempt that I made, in the way that I thought beſt, to prevail on the author of that pamphlet to *expoſe himſelf*. Having had the agreeable ſurpriſe, (even while the preliminary queſtion about engaging in the

the inquiry was yet pending in the *Senatus Academicus)*, to receive a letter from the author of the pamphlet, ſtill uſing his falſe name of J. Johnſon, in which he exerted all his eloquence and talents to *diſſuade* and *deter* me from urging that inquiry which I had propoſed; having alſo by that time got ſome valuable additional information about the ſaid pamphlet, and its birth and parentage; no leſs indeed than that one of the ſuppoſed or ſuſpected authors of it had intimated to one of his acquaintance, (the late Dr Adair junior), that he ſhould ſoon ſee a publication of his, but without his name; that a few days afterwards, but near a month before it was publiſhed here, he put into the hands of Dr Adair a copy of the ill-fated pamphlet; that Dr Adair recogniſed in it the ſentiments, and even ſome of the expreſſions which he had ſeveral times heard from that perſon; that afterwards he took occaſion to tell Dr A. that he had been accuſed of being the author of the pamphlet; that he was much hurt with the imputation, and begged Dr A. to contradict it, if ever he heard it mentioned; that Dr A. adviſed him to do this in a much more effectual way, by applying to the real author, through the medium of the London publiſhers of the pamphlet, and getting him to declare himſelf; that he had declined to do this, for very curious reaſons, inſinuating, that another perſon, whom he named, had alſo been ſuſpected of having written the pamphlet, inſinuating even that his own father, nay that he himſelf was in ſome meaſure concerned in it, " that the author might poſſibly have received ſome " hints reſpecting that publication, from his father or himſelf, by " means of ſome information which had been conveyed to a friend " in London," &c. &c. Having thus acquired almoſt certain knowledge that he was either the author of the pamphlet, or at leaſt privy and acceſſory to it, I thought it worth while to try to make him give further evidence againſt himſelf, even without knowing it. With this charitable intention, I wrote him, by way

of

of anſwer to his unexpected favour, ſuch a letter as no human being ever before wrote to another. My letter was committed to the care of his London publiſhers, who, I was ſure, would forward it, directly or indirectly, to the proper perſon: and he, I was pretty ſure, could not ſuſpect the real purpoſe of it; which was to provoke him to ſome abſurd and extravagant exploſion, which, inſtead of removing the ſuſpicion that he complained of, might confirm it for ever, and make him generally and indiſputably known as the author of the pamphlet. After a delay of a few days longer than I expected, but which was afterwards *fully and preciſely* accounted for, the exploſion took place in the very perſon in whom I intended and expected to produce it; and at the very moment when it began, I received a ſecond letter from J. Johnſon, Eſq; in which he vowed all manner of vengeance againſt me, but in the mean time gave me complete evidence that he *had* received my letter, and that he *had not* ſuſpected the purpoſe of it.

All theſe things, of courſe, I took care to explain very fully and publicly: and in due time I was favoured with a moſt edifying reply to my publication; ſuch a reply as did not ſeem to need any rejoinder from me: for bad as things were before, it made them rather worſe. But there is one point in it which it is now full time to explain, juſt to put an end to the horrible feelings and apprehenſions with which the author of it and his friends have been tormented for near ten long years.

Conceiving, I know not why, that it would ſerve his cauſe, and at leaſt render me odious, to make it be believed that my *Anſwer* to him, and to his appeal to the public, was to have been publiſhed, *whether his Appeal or exploſion had been made or not*, conceiving alſo, very rightly, as it appeared, that ſome people would believe ſuch an abſurdity, in his Reply to me, he hazards ſome ſuch apoſtrophe as this: (for not having his Pamphlet at hand, I quote from

from memory): " What muſt be the feelings of the reader, when " he knows that his (Dr Gregory's) pamphlet was actually in " the preſs before my letters were written," or ſomething to this effect.

The feelings of his readers, as well as his own, muſt indeed have been moſt awful: full of ſublime horror. My pamphlet contained the moſt preciſe reference to his publication; and there is much difficulty in conceiving how I could write with ſuch certain reference to another perſon's work not then written, on any ſuppoſition but one, and this one ſo plain and obvious, that it muſt inſtantly have occurred to every perſon who had faith enough to believe his aſſertion; and of courſe to himſelf, if he believed it: the ſuppoſition is only, that I had ſold myſelf to the Devil, and from him had learned exactly what that ill fated author was to write. That point being aſcertained, it followed plainly, by neceſſary conſequence, that the devil muſt come to take me away, as he did Dr Fauſtus, the very moment that the term expires, for which I had bargained. Every body knows that ten years is the longeſt term that he ever gives in ſuch bargains: and as this term is now almoſt expired, J. Johnſon, Eſq; and his friends muſt all be waiting in trembling hope of ſeeing me carried off in a grand ſtyle. But that no unreaſonable hopes, or groundleſs fears, may be entertained on my account, I think it right to declare that I have no pretenſions either to ſuch preternatural knowledge, or to ſuch a ſplendid exit from this world. Far from attempting, or thinking it poſſible, to write and print an anſwer to letters that were not then written, and might never have been written, I was humbly content with a plan of publiſhing certain " *Letters to and from J. Johnſon, Eſq;*" including of courſe my curious letter to him. This, which concerned only the ſaid J. Johnſon and myſelf, his good friend had heard of; probably by tampering with ſome of the printer's people; and being unable to diſtinguiſh between himſelf and J. Johnſon, Eſq;

ſuppoſed it was an anſwer to himſelf. As he could not, even when it moſt concerned him, make that nice diſtinction, he certainly cannot complain of other people for not making it. I ſhrewdly *ſuſpect* that he had got that valuable intelligence, and of courſe got into that unlucky puzzle, a *few weeks ſooner* than he is pleaſed to acknowledge; that is, *before*, not *after* his exploſion took place; and that the dread of ſeeing thoſe letters (eſpecially my curious one) in print, and his commendable eagerneſs to have the firſt fire, contributed not a little to produce the ſaid exploſion. The ſimple peruſal of that letter of mine, will go very near to ſettle this point at once: and if he or J. Johnſon, Eſq; chooſe to print it, I conſent to be judged by it; and engage even to give him a copy of his reply, (his ſecond letter to me), to be printed along with it. That reply, as well as my own letter to him, were ſuppreſſed, for certain reaſons, in my anſwer to the exploſion; but if he ſtill thinks that I have done him any injuſtice in that controverſy, particularly in ſuppreſſing thoſe two moſt edifying letters, the firſt of which, if erroneous in any reſpect, would have been concluſive evidence *againſt* myſelf, and the ſecond of which, if true in any reſpect, would have been a *complete vindication* of him, he is heartily welcome to publiſh them both. There can be no diſpute about the authenticity of my letter to J. Johnſon, Eſq; for it is in my own hand-writing; and in his ſecond letter, he acknowledged having received it. Further, I engage, as ſoon as he or his dear friend ſhall publiſh that letter, to point out, in the *exploſion* itſelf, certain alluſions to it: and ſuch alluſions as cannot be underſtood, or explained, or accounted for, on the ſuppoſition of accidental coincidence, or on any ſuppoſition but that of my letter having, directly or indirectly, reached the perſon for whom it was intended, and his anſwer to it having reached me, in a *very few days more* than the time neceſſary, in the regular courſe of poſt, for the letters in queſtion to perform *all their deſtined travels*, between Edinburgh and London.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, whenever that precious letter of mine ſhall be given to the public, I engage to ſhew, that between the day when the latter part of my letter was diſpatched from Edinburgh, and the day when the exploſion began, there was *time* for *my* letter to have gone from Edinburgh to London, from London to Bath, and back again from Bath to London and Edinburgh, ſo as to coincide with all the other circumſtances of the ſaid exploſion, which I firmly believe to have been produced by it. This point I took ſpecial care to aſcertain, firſt, by enquiry at the Poſt Office, ſecondly, by *actual experiment*, (writing to a friend who was in the neighbourhood of Bath, and getting his anſwer in courſe of poſt), becauſe it was ſtrongly maintained in the *Reply* to my account of that buſineſs, that *one* of the copartnery of the London bookſellers, to whoſe care my letter had been directed, was then at Bath, and that there was not time for my letter to have gone to Bath, and to have returned to Edinburgh, in time to have produced the exploſion. The coincidence in that circumſtance, as in every other, was perfect. Such was the nature of that literary fox-chace, to which Mr John Bell is pleaſed to allude, as an *obſtetrical* quarrel of mine.

But whatever reaſons I have for thinking unfavourably of the underſtanding and morals of one male practitioner of Midwifery, I never did nor could extend that unfavourable opinion to all others of the ſame profeſſion. If this had been poſſible, it would have been juſt as abſurd, as it would be to extend, by the power of fancy, the good opinion which I entertain of ſome individuals of every profeſſion, to all others of the ſame profeſſions: and withal, it would be moſt uncharitable and unjuſt. I ſhould be very ſorry indeed, to be ſuppoſed capable of thinking and acting in a manner at once ſo irrational and illiberal: and I ſhould be ſtill more ſorry, to be thought capable of the folly of remonſtrating, or argu-

ing ſeriouſly, with the great, and gay, and faſhionable world, on the abſurdity and indelicacy of employing generally men-midwives, whether their aſſiſtance be needed or not. I ſhould as ſoon think of running my head againſt the firſt axiom of geometry, or againſt all of them in ſucceſſion, as of controverting the fundamental maxim of all faſhionable and profitable phyſic; *ſi populus vult decipi, decipiatur.* I only take the liberty to laugh at that, as at many other faſhionable follies, which I know it is in vain, and which at any rate it is not my buſineſs, to attempt to reform. As I have had occaſion to learn from one very reſpectable male practitioner of midwifery, who ſeriouſly remonſtrated with me on the ſubject, that what I had ſaid in my former Memorial with reſpect to men-midwives had been miſunderſtood, I take this opportunity to fulfil my promiſe to him, by ſtating explicitly my ſentiments on that ſubject.

In the *firſt* place then, I hold it as a moſt ſacred principle, too plain and obvious to require any proof or illuſtration, or to admit of diſpute, that women labouring of child, juſt as much as women not labouring of child, or more if poſſible, ought to receive every aſſiſtance and comfort, which their ſituation requires.

Further, I hold, that, when the ſituation of a woman labouring of child is ſuch, as to require chirurgical operation, or aſſiſtance by means of inſtruments, this aſſiſtance ought to be rendered to her by a *man*, well inſtructed in anatomy, regularly bred to Surgery, and accuſtomed to the uſe of chirurgical inſtruments. For I do not conceive that women are fit to practiſe Surgery; and I am convinced that few, if any, of them would chooſe to attempt it.

I can hardly conceive that any perſon ſhould be ſuch a monſter of cruelty, or yet of ſo capricious a temper, as to object to women in labour receiving, whenever they need it, ſuch aſſiſtance; and

this

this from ſuch hands as I have ſpecified. But ſurely it does not follow from theſe principles, or from any others that ever I heard of, that women labouring of child ought to have the manual aſſiſtance of male Surgeons, any more than the application of chirurgical inſtruments, when they do not need them; which is the caſe at leaſt ninety-nine times in the hundred.

As I have not the honour to be an Atheiſt, I firmly believe that women by nature are juſt as able to bear and nurſe children, as their mates are to beget them; often much better; as they every now and then take occaſion to convince the world in general, and their affectionate huſbands in particular. Nay, I believe they are made for thoſe very purpoſes, and ſo well qualified for them, that it would contribute greatly both to their health and happineſs, if they were conſtantly employed either in breeding or nurſing children, for five and twenty or thirty years of their lives. Every body knows the reaſon for which the bearing of children was made a work of great pain and labour: but it was no part of the ſentence paſſed on Eve and her female deſcendants, that it ſhould be alſo a work of danger, or any thing like a diſeaſe. There is much reaſon to ſuſpect that the danger and the diſeaſes often connected with child-bearing, are produced by our own prepoſterous management, and our abſurd contrivances and interference, in order to aſſiſt nature, in one of her moſt important operations; which, like all the reſt of them, is contrived with perfect knowledge and wiſdom.

As ſoon as I knew what midwifery meant, I formed that notion of its importance, which is expreſſed in the following paſſage of a very popular work, written by my father, and publiſhed near forty years ago.

" Every other animal brings forth its young without any aſ-
" ſiſtance; but we judge Nature inſufficient for that work; and
" think a midwife underſtands it better. What numbers of in-
" fants as well as mothers are deſtroyed by the prepoſterous ma-
" nagement

" nagement of theſe artiſts, is well known to all who have inquired " into this matter. The moſt knowing and ſucceſsful practition- " ers, if they are candid, will own, that in common and natural " caſes Nature is entirely ſufficient, and their buſineſs is only to " aſſiſt her efforts, in caſe of weakneſs of the mother, or an unna- " tural poſition of the child."

That portion of common ſenſe and ſympathetic tenderneſs, which nature hath implanted in all mankind, has taught them univerſally, that it is proper for women, in thoſe hours of pain and ſorrow, to have the *comfort* and *encouragement*, which thoſe of their own ſex who had been in the ſame ſituation can beſt give them, and which in general is much better for them than the *aſſiſtance* of profeſſed midwives. But as the diſcharge of that humane and charitable office muſt often have been irkſome and inconvenient to women who had other buſineſs and other duties to perform, in all towns and populous countries midwifery has become the profeſſion of a few experienced matrons. There is too much reaſon to believe, that many of theſe have often been too buſy, and have endeavoured to give much aſſiſtance, where none was needed; ſometimes with a view to ſhorten the time of their own irkſome attendance; ſometimes to gratify the impatience of thoſe under their care; ſometimes to raiſe their art, and themſelves, in the opinion of their patients an others. There is at leaſt equal reaſon to believe, that the ſame conſiderations, and the additional motive of wiſhing to ſhow their own vaſt ſuperiority in knowledge and dexterity over common midwives, have induced, and ever will induce, many male practitioners of midwifery to be as needleſsly and as perniciouſly buſy. A man who is to live by midwifery as a profeſſion muſt be well eſtabliſhed in reputation and practice, and muſt even have an uncommon ſhare of wiſdom and virtue, before he dare venture to tell his patients, or even to let them perceive by his conduct, that in ninety-nine caſes of the hundred, they had no occaſion for his aſſiſtance,

and

and that he did nothing for them; in ſhort, that bearing children is one of the things that they muſt do for themſelves, becauſe nobody can do it for them. At leaſt I do not remember to have heard or read of any women who became mothers by proxy; as many great, and wiſe, and good men have become fathers, without any trouble to themſelves. That women may bear children for themſelves, in the great proportion of caſes ſpecified, muſt be pretty evident from the moſt obvious conſiderations. When the firſt man-midwife that we know of, Paulus Ægineta, was born, there were about one hundred millions of people in the Roman Empire. At this time there is not in the great Empire of China one man-midwife: and yet at leaſt thirty thouſand children are born in that empire *every day;* and probably twice or thrice as many in the reſt of the world, without any ſuch preternatural aſſiſtance. Even in thoſe countries of Europe, in which the faſhion of employing men-midwives has prevailed the moſt and the longeſt, ſtill a large proportion of the women bear children without their help, as the grandmothers and great-grandmothers of all of them did. Our ladies, who moſt firmly believe that they cannot bear their own children, but muſt be delivered by a male operator, and our gentlemen, who, no leſs wiſely, believe that ſuch is the caſe with their wives, and their ſiſters, and their daughters, cannot fail to know, that their mothers, and aunts, and grandmothers, in all the generations that have been ſince the creation of the world, bore their own children: yet none of them think of enquiring when and why this new curſe was entailed upon the daughters of Eve. Any of them who have a little curioſity, and not much to do, may perhaps find ſome amuſement in calculating the number of perſons from whom they are lineally deſcended, even within forty or fifty generations. The ſeries increaſes rapidly, 2, 4, 8, 16, for the firſt, ſecond, third, and fourth generations paſt; then all theſe numbers are to be added together to ſhew the ſum total of their anceſtors in any given

given number of generations: but if they take only the laſt great number of the ſeries, they will ſoon find that they muſt have had, within the number of generations ſpecified, *thouſands*, nay *millions* of *millions* of anceſtors, if there had been ſo many on the face of the earth at any one time: and whatever deductions may be made from thoſe vaſt numbers, on the ſcore of couſinſhip, ſtill it will remain certain, that every perſon muſt have had millions of anceſtors, one half of whom muſt have been females, who bore their children without the help of men-midwives.

The ſame kind of calculation will alſo afford much comfort to thoſe who have ſucceeded in perſuading themſelves, and labour hard to perſuade their Phyſicians, that in their families there are no hereditary diſeaſes. As to the buſineſs of Midwifery, which led to theſe remarks, I have only further to add, that in every caſe in which there is reaſon to apprehend any danger, or any preternatural difficulty, in childbirth; that is, whenever a woman is deformed; for I know of nothing elſe that can enable any perſon to foreſee ſuch danger or difficulty, the aſſiſtance of a ſkilful male operator, with all proper inſtruments, ſhould be provided in due time, but certainly not employed unleſs abſolutely needed. In thoſe caſes, whether of deformity or not, in which ſome aſſiſtance, but not that of chirurgical inſtruments, is needed, I conceive it may be given as well, and probably better, for a moſt obvious reaſon, by a woman.

I conſider bearing children as exactly on the ſame footing with performing the more common offices of nature. Every lady who experiences preternatural difficulty or impediment on any ſuch occaſion, and is thereby expoſed to diſeaſe or danger, ought unqueſtionably to receive ſuch aſſiſtance as her ſituation requires: and all of us, I am ſure, Phyſicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries, in our ſeveral capacities, will at all times be found eager to render her every ſervice in our power. But unleſs there be abſolute neceſſity

ceſſity for it, I ſhould think it indelicate and improper for any male perſon to give his manual aſſiſtance: and I ſhould think it amply ſufficient for all purpoſes of ſafety and dignity, on ſuch occaſions, and alſo more conſiſtent with the vulgar notions of decency and delicacy, if a Knight of the diſcreeteſt, or, according to the rank and fortune of the Lady, two or more ſuch Knights, properly armed and accoutred, ſhould mount guard at her Ladyſhip's door.

The remark with which my father has introduced the paſſage that I have quoted from his *Comparative View*, I know, is not ſtrictly accurate: it muſt be underſtood with certain limitations and exceptions. The induſtry and patient obſervations of modern naturaliſts have aſcertained, that the females of ſome kinds of animals do really need aſſiſtance, and particularly the aſſiſtance of the male, in bringing forth their young. This is well known to be the caſe with the toad, and with ſome other loathſome reptiles: but it has never even been pretended, that ſuch is the caſe with any of thoſe animals whoſe bodily conſtitution and functions moſt nearly reſemble our own; and whom we, perhaps fooliſhly and preſumptuouſly, call the nobler and more perfect animals. In ſtrict philoſophical propriety, we muſt admit, that all the productions of nature are good and perfect. Even the ingenious Frenchman, to whom we owe that intereſting diſcovery with reſpect to the toad, introduces his account of it by wiſhing, for the benefit of ſome readers, that what he was to tell us had related rather to pigeons and turtle-doves, than to a kind of animal that we cannot think of without horror: but he adds very ſagaciouſly, that the imagination and the eyes *du Phyſicien* are not ſo delicate. (See *Memoires de l'Academie Royale des Sciences*, 1741; Article, *Crapaud male Accoucheur de ſa femelle.)* Such being, for reaſons which we do not fully underſtand, the wiſe inſtitution of nature with reſpect to that animal, it is evidently as proper

and becoming, for the male toad to give his aſſiſtance, and for the female to receive it, when ſhe is in labour, as it is for men and women to become fathers and mothers. But men and women are not toads; nor under any obligation, phyſical or moral, that I can perceive, to follow their example in that reſpect.

If the caſe were not real, and ſo recent, as to be ſtill freſh in the memory of many thouſands not near ſo old as I am, it would be thought a moſt extravagant fiction, to ſtate, by way of illuſtration of my opinion on this ſubject, what was propoſed, and in ſome meaſure done, by a certain unworthy member of our moſt noble Faculty. This celebrated Mountebank, obſerving how many difficulties and deficiencies often occur, with reſpect to that function which muſt always precede the bearing of children, and is therefore juſt as neceſſary to the proſperity, and even to the exiſtence of every State; knowing alſo how often ſuch deficiencies and diſeaſes are the objects of regular medical practice in private; nobly reſolved to make his ſuperior knowledge of that branch of phyſic a public benefit, for the good of his country. In proſecution of this generous and ſpirited plan, he publicly read lectures on generation, in London, Edinburgh, Glaſgow, and, I believe, ſeveral other cities of this kingdom. He alſo fitted up, and opened for public uſe, a ſplendid temple of Health, as he called it, and a ſtill more ſplendid temple of Hymen: in one or both of which temples, the roſy Goddeſs of Health appeared *in propria perſona*, and diſpenſed very freely her healthful favours among her ardent votaries. If my memory does not greatly deceive me, his temple of Hymen was within a few doors of his Majeſty's palace of St James's. I believe he had in that temple ſeveral convenient chambers, for the ſake of Clinical practice: but he had one in particular fitted up in a ſtyle of extraordinary magnificence, with what he called a celeſtial bed, and a moſt ſplendid electrical apparatus; and many other contrivances, aërial, etherial, and magnetical; with which he

he was to perform miracles, and to enable many great and gay people to become fathers or mothers; which honour, without his aid, they had no chance of attaining. As his doctrine and practice were equally repugnant to decency and common ſenſe, and as there are no bounds to the folly and credulity of the people among whom he practiſed, I have no doubt that the faſhion ſo auſpiciouſly begun by him would ſoon have become general, at leaſt among the rich and great. But the genial Doctor's too ardent zeal for his favourite ſcience carried him a ſtep too far: it carried him to Dublin. Thither he went expreſs, to teach and help Iriſhmen to beget children. One bold Scotchman, to the immortal honour of our country be it known, went ſingly to attack a great and gallant people on their ſtrong corner. Such an inſult could not be endured by any people; leaſt of all by the choſen people of St Patrick: who, on this occaſion, behaved with infinitely more ſpirit and good ſenſe, than the inhabitants of either end of this Iſland had ſhown. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, feeling no doubt his own ſhare of the indignity, threatened to ſend him to Bridewell: and meaſures, as I have been told, were actually concerted for toſſing him in a blanket at his firſt lecture. But the genial Doctor, underſtanding his danger, by a quick retreat, eſcaped the fate of Sancho Panza; leaving however the men of Ireland as ignorant, and as incapable as he found them, of their firſt great duty as men and citizens. Yet we hear of no complaints, from that country, of ignorance, incapacity, or neglect of that duty; nor has there been any failure in its population: And I firmly believe, that the caſe would have been the ſame, and that the females would have done their part of that firſt duty to their country juſt as well, if they had had as little aſſiſtance from Men-Midwives, as the males had from that illuſtrious Mountebank.

There remain yet to be conſidered two very ſplendid paſſages of Mr John Bell's pamphlet, deeply intereſting to the Managers and to the public; and well worthy of ample diſcuſſion, both on account of their ſuperior rhetorical merit, and alſo for the atrocity of the miſrepreſentations which they contain.

The firſt of theſe occurs in the 38th page of his ſecond ſection; in the preceding part of which, he has given a very ample and eloquent account " of the origin and nature of the connection be- " twixt the Royal Infirmary and the College of Surgeons." Under this head, he details very fully the great and various merits of the Surgeons, both active and paſſive, with reſpect to the Infirmary: I mean both all the good that they have done, and all the evil that they have ſuffered; that is, in plain Engliſh, all the evils, inconveniencies, and dangers, which *their patients* have ſuffered, by their connection with this Hoſpital; for all of which, it appears that he thinks the Surgeons well entitled to take great credit and merit to themſelves. This detail occupies full twelve pages of his Anſwer to me, namely, from page 26. to 38. of his ſecond ſection. To theſe pages, by far too long to quote here, I beg leave to refer the curious or diſtruſtful reader. After enumerating the many evils to which the patients were expoſed, he finiſhes his grand enumeration and climax of the ſufferings of the patients, and the merits of the Surgeons, in theſe memorable words: " Worſe than all, our " patients are expoſed to infections from the Medical Wards, and " eſpecially to a diſeaſe, the Hoſpital ſore, which ſeizes all thoſe " who have even the ſmalleſt inciſions practiſed upon them: it in- " fects all the ulcers, changes the ſlighteſt ſores into gangrenes; " and this diſeaſe, which is frequent, in exact proportion to the " ſize of an Hoſpital, is ſo peculiar, that it is named Hoſpital- " gangrene. It is like a plague; it rages twice a year in ſuch a " degree,

" degree, that the nurſes even are infected; the ſlighteſt ſcratch in " their fingers turns out a moſt formidable ſore, and at certain " ſeaſons no operation can be ſafely performed."

This paſſage well deſerves to be conſidered more ways than one; rhetorically, phyſically, logically, and morally. Conſidered rhetorically, it is evidently beyond all praiſe; it is indeed ſuch a ſplendid example of ſuperior genius, as probably no man in the world but Mr John Bell could have thought of. In this point of view, it is no leſs than a bold attempt to ſnatch my own ſtick out of my hand, and with it to knock me down.

To explain this, I muſt quote a paſſage from my former Memorial, (page 24th), to ſhow in what cautious and general terms I had alluded to that cruel evil, which Mr John Bell ſo boldly thruſts in our faces, and ſeems to take delight in exaggerating to the utmoſt. After mentioning many advantages which might reaſonably be expected from the attendance of a Surgeon permanently appointed for the Hoſpital-duty, I add the following paragraph.

" Moreover, ſuch a Surgeon, in the courſe of his attendance in " an Hoſpital, has opportunities of obſerving many defects or " errors, in the general ſyſtem of management, with reſpect to " the patients in his department; has time to conſider how they " may beſt be ſupplied or corrected; to propoſe plans of improve- " ment, and to get theſe introduced, and fairly tried and adopted. " This is always an ungracious taſk, and a work of much time " and labour; foraſmuch as it never fails to meet with ſtrong op- " poſition, from the force of habit, the prejudices, the pride, the " lazineſs and the obſtinacy of thoſe who muſt execute the plans " propoſed."

This delicate alluſion to evils but too generally known, I conceived to be ſufficient for my purpoſe. It could not fail to be underſtood by every Surgeon, and by almoſt every Student, who had

had attended in this Hoſpital. If any of the Managers, not of the Medical profeſſion, did not underſtand it ſufficiently, it could eaſily have been explained to them privately; but I ſhould have been ſorry, without neceſſity, to have ſhocked the public, and eſpecially the ſick poor, with the knowledge of all the horrid evils, and the apprehenſion of the worſt dangers, to which thoſe were expoſed who were admitted into the Surgeons Wards: even though I firmly believed, and do ſtill believe, that thoſe evils and dangers to which I alluded with ſo much reſerve, and which Mr John Bell has proclaimed with no reſerve at all, were purely the *fault* of *ſome* of the attending Surgeons, and ultimately of that ſyſtem of their indiſcriminate attendance by rotation, which it was my object to get aboliſhed. I muſt alſo declare, that, till I read his Anſwer to me, I had never ſeen or heard ſo dreadful an account of that evil. For good reaſons, however, I ſhall not diſpute his *fact*, but let him and his friends take it as he has ſtated it, and as they have adopted and ſanctioned his ſtatement of it: let them make the moſt or the worſt of their own fact; remembering always, that, along with it, they muſt take its neceſſary conſequences, which are conſiderably different from what they thought of. Some of theſe neceſſary conſequences, implied in their own fact as ſtated by themſelves, I ſhall take the liberty to point out to them. I beg it may be obſerved alſo, that while, in compliment to them, I admit *their fact* in all its horrors, I do not admit their theory with reſpect to the cauſe of it. This point, which is of much importance, muſt be determined by evidence of a kind very different from an aſſertion of Mr John Bell, or a vote of thanks of his clients.

All that I alluded to, in the paſſage quoted from my former Memorial, indeed all that I had ever known or heard of, with reſpect to the evils alluded to in that paragraph, was only, that *ſometimes*, from neglect of due ventilation and cleanlineſs in the Surgeons Wards, the patients in them ſuffered ſeverely; a ſlight wound or ulcer

ulcer in many caſes degenerating into a bad ſpreading ſore of great extent, ſcarce to be healed, ſometimes running to gangrene, and attended with fever, and ultimately proving fatal. I underſtood likewiſe, that, in many inſtances, operations ſeemingly well performed, had ſoon proved fatal, from the ſame cauſes: inſtead of good ſuppuration and healing, bad ſpreading ulceration, and gangrene, and fever, ſupervening upon them. I underſtood even that ſuch bad condition of wounds or ulcers had ſometimes ſpread in the Surgeons Wards of this Hoſpital, as in other hoſpitals, ſeemingly by contagion. I knew that this did not happen *always*, or even generally in this Hoſpital; and I thought I had known the reaſon of its ſometimes happening, and ſometimes not; namely, that ſome of the attending Surgeons were duly attentive to ventilation and cleanlineſs, with reſpect to which others of them were moſt culpably negligent. I had often heard that this difference in their conduct and practice in the Surgery Wards was very apparent; and I believed it without heſitation, becauſe I knew, from repeated experience, that there were ſuch differences among them, on thoſe points, in private practice. I have had many occaſions of obſerving, that, in the treatment of patients labouring under medical, not chirurgical diſeaſes, for example fevers, ſome of them were as attentive as poſſible to ventilation and cleanlineſs, which others of them ſeemed never once to think of. As this latter mode of practice could not proceed entirely from ignorance, I judged that it was part of their ſyſtem; of which indeed one or two of them gave me ſome pretty broad hints, when I urged the neceſſity of clean linen, open windows, and no fires. If they acted on the ſame principles in the Surgery Wards, I can have no doubt what the conſequence muſt have been in two months, or even much leſs.——It may with ſome confidence be inferred from Mr John Bell's horrible account of the evils in queſtion, that my notion of them when I wrote that paragraph laſt quoted from

from my former Memorial, was *not worſe* than the truth; and that the more particular account which I have here given of it is at leaſt no *exaggeration*. Nor, in my opinion, would it be going too far, to infer from the paſſage laſt quoted from Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, that he and his clients knew well that the evils in queſtion were too great and notorious to be denied, or concealed, or explained away: and that therefore, like a man of genius, and a great orator, he endeavoured to make the beſt he could of ſo bad a buſineſs; by proclaiming it in terms at leaſt as ſtrong as were conſiſtent with truth, but very dexterouſly transferring the reproach of it from the Surgeons to the Phyſicians. On this point Mr John Bell and I chiefly differ; and I fear we differ irreconcileably. Admitting his *fact*, or all his *facts*, as ſtated by himſelf, it is unqueſtionably reaſonable, and even neceſſary in point of ſcience, to enquire into the evidence of his *opinion* with reſpect to the *cauſe* of thoſe *facts*; namely, that the Hoſpital-gangrene, with all its horrible conſequences to the patients in the Surgeons Wards, is produced by infections from the Medical Wards. Though he has moſt rhetorically ſtated this *opinion* as a matter of *fact*, and in terms as ſtrong and poſitive as any of the facts and aſſertions with which it is blended, yet I cannot ſuppoſe either him, or any of his clients, ſo ignorant of ſcience, as not to know, that his account of the origin of that horrid diſeaſe, whether right or wrong, is but a matter of opinion or judgment, which, if juſt and true, may be proved by proper evidence, and which, if erroneous, may be diſproved, by accurate obſervations, and ſtrict inferences from theſe. And if by ſuch means it were completely diſproved, this would imply no impeachment of the probity and veracity of men who had *bona fide* believed and expreſſed that opinion; but only a little diminution of their character for accuracy in obſervation, and ſtrictneſs and ſoundneſs in reaſoning.

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As he has not condeſcended to mention the reaſons on which his opinion is founded, and as I never heard any reaſons aſſigned for ſuch an opinion, nor indeed ever heard of the opinion itſelf till I met with it in his pamphlet, it is equally unneceſſary and impoſſible to attempt to ſhow the fallacy of the obſervations, and the errors of the reaſoning, which led to that ſingular opinion. In ſtrict ſcientific propriety, his opinion on that point, juſt like his numerous facts already diſcuſſed in this Memorial, ought to go for nothing, and to be regarded as only a kind of dream, till ſome direct and complete proof of it be given. But, on ſo important a ſubject, it would be wrong to be very punctilious: and therefore, waving all ſuch conſiderations, I ſhall ſtate a few of the many reaſons which occur to me for thinking his opinion, or ſcientific fact, with reſpect to the origin of the hoſpital-gangrene in the ſurgeons wards, juſt as erroneous, and as impoſſible, as any of his other moſt ſplendid facts already conſidered.

Suppoſing, firſt, for the ſake of argument, that the medical wards were as full of infections as his heart could wiſh; ſuppoſing even that there were fifty patients in them ill of the plague; I do not believe, judging from the analogy of very numerous and accurate obſervations with reſpect to the ſpreading of diſeaſes by infection, that ſuch infections could reach the ſurgeons wards, ſo as to produce any diſeaſe in the patients in them. It is known in fact, that the plague itſelf does not ſpread to any conſiderable diſtance through the air, and that, by avoiding contact, or very cloſe communication, with thoſe ill of the plague, the danger of catching it by infection is effectually precluded. A few years ago, this was tried with ſucceſs, in very unfavourable circumſtances, on board a great ſhip of war, (the Theſeus of 74 guns), on the coaſt of Syria. Four or five French priſoners, ill of the plague, were received on board that ſhip. One of them, an officer, was allowed a cabin to himſelf; the reſt of them were kept together in a ſmall place (birth), ſeparated from the reſt of the crew only

by a partition of painted canvas. In this ſituation they recovered: the officer, ſeemingly by his own obſtinacy, died: but what is of much more conſequence, by that judicious care of Mr Tainſh, the ſurgeon of the Theſeus, the ſpreading of the plague from the infected priſoners to the crew, in number above five hundred, was completely prevented. Numberleſs other facts of the ſame kind, and perfectly well atteſted, with reſpect to the preventing contagious fevers from ſpreading, may be found in the writings of Dr Haygarth, and of many other eminent Phyſicians, who, within theſe twenty years, have attended, minutely and judiciouſly, to that important ſubject.

Suppoſing, ſecondly, ſtill for the ſake of argument, that *infections* of any kind, or of all kinds that are known, of common continued fever with or without ſpots, of ſmall-pox, meaſles, ſcarlet fever, eryſipelas, dyſentery, hooping-cough, &c. from the medical wards, may reach the ſurgeons wards of this Infirmary, in ſuch a degree of concentration and force as to be highly noxious, I do not believe that they would produce the hoſpital-gangrene in any of the ſurgeons patients: nor can I believe that ſuch infections ſhould produce one kind of effect in patients who have wounds or ulcers, and their own ſpecific but very different effects in patients who have ſound ſkins. But as there are at leaſt as great differences with reſpect to faith, as to underſtanding and knowledge, among Phyſicians and Surgeons, I have no doubt that ſome will be found with faith enough to believe intuitively all thoſe propoſitions which to me appear to require the moſt ample and rigorous proof.

I ſhall therefore endeavour to ſhew, that the opinion in queſtion *muſt* be erroneous, for as much as it implies, by *neceſſary conſequence*, certain inferences, which are notoriouſly falſe in point of fact. One of the moſt obvious of theſe is the following. If infections, or noxious effluvia, from the medical wards, can reach the

the ſurgeons wards, by the windows, or the ſtair-caſes, or the cloaths of thoſe whoſe duty it is to go into every part of the Hoſpital, the ſame infections, or effluvia, *muſt* be infinitely more copious, more concentrated and ſtrong, and therefore much more noxious, in the medical wards themſelves, from which they proceed; and therefore in theſe wards they *muſt neceſſarily* produce at leaſt the ſame bad effects, but probably much worſe effects of the ſame kind, which Mr John Bell aſſerts they produce in the ſurgeons wards. But it never was even pretended that this happened in the medical wards, to thoſe patients, on whom the ſlighteſt, or not the ſlighteſt, inciſions and excoriations have been performed. In the common medical, in the clinical, in the fever wards, juſt as readily as in the ſurgeons wards, the nurſes ſcratch their hands and fingers: nay I have known them, even when there were patients in the clinical wards ill of infectious fevers, ſcratch one another's faces very handſomely, and not very ſlightly, having got drunk with the wine which I had preſcribed for thoſe patients. But I never knew nor heard of one of them getting the hoſpital-gangrene on her hands or face from ſuch ſcratches. Some patients are occaſionally admitted into the common medical and clinical wards, with ſimple, or ſcrofulous, or ſyphilitic, or cancerous ulcers; and hundreds of patients in theſe wards, every year, undergo ſlight inciſions or wounds, by bleeding, either with the lancet or with leeches, or by cupping and ſcarifying, by opening impoſthumes, by puncturing, or by tapping for dropſies of different kinds; and worſe than all, undergo ample excoriation, by bliſters, without getting hoſpital-gangrene, or any thing like it; nay ſuch excoriations and ſmall inciſions, as by bleeding with the lancet or leeches, are often performed on patients actually labouring under the infectious fever, without inducing any hoſpital-gangrene: and ſometimes, in the courſe of ſuch fevers, though much leſs frequently in the Hoſpital than in private practice among the

lower orders of people, common black gangrene has taken place in ſome of the parts on which the patient had chiefly reſted; which black gangrene has ſeparated, and healed, in the common manner, without exhibiting any of the peculiar ſymptoms of the hoſpital-ſore. The ſame has occurred, within my obſervation, in ſeveral inſtances of gangrene in dropſical limbs, both from their burſting ſpontaneouſly, (as it is called), and from their being punctured to prevent their burſting, and to relieve the urgent ſymptoms of the diſeaſe. The ſame has alſo happened, within my knowledge, when the bliſtered parts gangrened in patients ill of very bad infectious fevers: but this is ſo rare an occurrence, that, to the beſt of my remembrance, I have not ſeen one inſtance of it theſe twenty years.

From all that I have had occaſion to know of the medical and the ſurgeons wards in this Hoſpital, and from all that I have heard or read of the hoſpital-gangrene, far from believing that in the Surgeons patients it is produced by infections from the medical wards, I ſtrongly ſuſpect, and almoſt believe, that ſome patients labouring under that diſeaſe might have been cured, if they had been removed from the ſurgeons to the phyſicians wards; that is, removed from foul, into comparatively pure air. I have read of a patient recovering of the ſame gangrene, in the hoſpital at Lyons, by being laid in a cold door-caſe; and of ſeveral patients in the Hotel Dieu at Paris, ill of different diſeaſes, who were ſuppoſed to be in the laſt agonies, and on that account were removed from the common wards, that they might die without diſturbing their neighbours, and yet recovered on being laid in the *Salle des agoniſans;* where, without being tormented by unavailing or perhaps abſurd medical practice, they had the advantage of breathing purer and cooler air than they had enjoyed from the moment that they were admitted into that great but ill-managed hoſpital. Though I am ſenſible it would be criminal to try

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the experiment, yet I think it highly probable, that a patient who has juſt undergone a capital operation, would have a much better chance of a good and ſpeedy recovery, if laid in the fever-ward, clean, and well ventilated, as it is, than he would have had if laid in the ſurgeons ward, in that ſtate of cleanlineſs and ventilation which has ſometimes prevailed in it.

From the very confident manner in which the hoſpital-gangrene in the Surgeons patients is attributed to infections from the medical wards, it ſhould ſeem, that neither Mr John Bell nor his clients had any notion, that *infections*, I mean infectious fevers of the worſt kind, could begin in Surgeons patients, either from want of cleanlineſs and ventilation, implying the accumulation, and perhaps the corruption of the ordinary effluvia of the human body, or, in addition to theſe, from the peculiarly noxious effluvia from wounds, ulcers, and gangrenes, which are ſuch frequent objects of chirurgical practice, and ſo ſtrongly require particular attention to ventilation and cleanlineſs. It is ſo generally and juſtly thought needleſs at leaſt, if not fooliſh, to diſpute about names and words, that few people can prevail on themſelves to attend patiently to ſuch a diſcuſſion, even in the few caſes in which it is really of importance. That there are ſuch caſes appears to me certain; nor ſhould I ſcruple to ſay, that, in every caſe in which a word or name is explained or defined, or, even without explanation or definition, is uſed and applied, to expreſs an erroneous or hypothetical opinion or notion with reſpect to the thing denoted by it, then it becomes neceſſary, for the purpoſes of candid and good reaſoning, to ſhow the errors and imperfections of the notion or opinion expreſſed by ſuch an improper word or phraſe. Of this there cannot be a ſtronger proof, or better illuſtration, than Mr John Bell has given us, in the uſe which he has made of the phraſe hoſpital-gangrene. This phraſe, conſidered by itſelf, is as intelligible and as innocent, as the common phraſes, jail-fever, ſea-ſcurvy, French diſeaſe, or St Vitus's dance.

dance. But if theſe ſeveral names were employed to denote, not merely certain diſeaſes, that is, particular combinations and ſucceſſions of ſymptoms, which might be faithfully deſcribed and eaſily known, but alſo certain opinions with reſpect to the cauſes of thoſe diſeaſes, it would be proper to enquire into the juſtneſs of theſe opinions; and to proteſt againſt ſuch of them as were found to be either poſitively erroneous, or at beſt only hypothetical, as not being eſtabliſhed by any competent evidence. For example, if an author, on the faith or force of the term *ſea-ſcurvy*, ſhould take it into his head to maintain, that this diſeaſe was produced only by the ſea, and its ſalt and moiſt effluvia, and never could take place on ſhore; and that it could neither be prevented nor cured in people who continued long at ſea: if another author ſhould maintain, that the diſeaſe called the jail-fever could be produced only in a jail, and could neither be prevented nor cured in people who were confined in jails: and if another author ſhould maintain, that the French diſeaſe could be got only in France, and was entirely produced by the infectious air of that country: all theſe opinions, though ſeemingly implied in the names of the diſeaſes, and almoſt admitted and ſanctioned by all who uſed thoſe names, would be great and pernicious errors. Every perſon, of competent underſtanding and knowledge, would think them as abſurd, as the perſuaſion that the diſeaſe called St Vitus's Dance, was produced only by the operation of that Saint, as a puniſhment on thoſe who had neglected the annual worſhip at his ſhrine, and was to be cured only by the patients going to his ſhrine, and there dancing till they were heartily tired, and fell to the ground.

Such imaginary caſes as I have ſtated, may well appear too extravagant even for illuſtration; yet they are little, if at all worſe than the real caſe, which Mr John Bell has exhibited ſeriouſly, in the account that he gives of the hoſpital-gangrene. Not content with the uſe of the phraſe to denote the diſeaſe in queſtion, which

which could not have been made the ſubject of diſpute or animadverſion, he has thought fit to make it the groundwork of his own theory with reſpect to the cauſe of the diſeaſe; of that theory which is calculated to transfer the blame of it from the Surgeons to the Phyſicians. He tells us, that this diſeaſe is produced by *infections from the medical wards;* that it is frequent in *exact proportion* to the ſize of an hoſpital; that it ſeizes *all* thoſe who have even the *ſmalleſt inciſions* practiſed upon them; that it is like a *plague*; that it *rages twice a-year* in ſuch a degree that the nurſes even are infected; that the *ſlighteſt ſcratch* in their fingers turns out a moſt formidable ſore; and that at *certain ſeaſons* no operations can be *ſafely* performed. Theſe are the points which I think deſerve to be conſidered logically, and phyſically; as affording the moſt ſatisfactory proof of the vaſt progreſs which Mr John Bell and his clients have made both in logical and phyſical ſcience.

Firſt, let us conſider what is obviouſly implied in its being frequent in *exact proportion* to the ſize of an hoſpital, and in its raging in *this* Hoſpital *twice a-year* like a plague. From theſe two propoſitions, it follows, by neceſſary conſequence, that in an hoſpital half the ſize of ours it *muſt* rage but once a-year; that in an hoſpital the fourth part of the ſize of ours it *muſt* rage but once in two years; that in an hoſpital the tenth part of the ſize of ours, and containing only fifteen or twenty patients, it *muſt* rage once, and but once, in five years; but that in an hoſpital twice the ſize of ours, it *muſt* rage four times, and not oftener, in a year; that in an hoſpital ten times the ſize of ours, and containing 1500 or 2000 patients, it *muſt* rage twenty times in a year. But as the diſeaſe, in any one patient, laſts generally from one to three or four weeks, and moreover ſpreads, by contagion, from one patient to another, in an hoſpital ten times, or even four times, the ſize of ours, it *muſt* conſtantly rage like a plague; and therefore every patient admitted into ſuch an hoſpital, whether under the care of the Phyſicians or Surgeons, provided only he has any the ſmalleſt inciſion performed

formed upon him, *muſt*, *ipſo facto*, be ſeized with hoſpital-gangrene: no operation can be ſafely performed in ſuch an hoſpital; nay ſcarce without the *certainty* of death to the patient; and every nurſe who ſcratches her own finger, or gets her face ſcratched by one of the ſiſterhood, *muſt* alſo get the hoſpital-gangrene, and probably rot and die with it.

In another point of view, the aſſertions, that it is produced by *infections from the medical wards*, that it rages *twice a-year*, and that it is frequent in *exact proportion* to the ſize of an hoſpital, are abſolutely inconſiſtent. If it rages in this hoſpital twice a-year, it *muſt* proceed from a cauſe, or combination of cauſes, which occurs twice a-year, and no oftener. If that ſuppoſed cauſe were conſtantly preſent, as the effluvia from the medical wards muſt be, or even occurred oftener than twice a-year, while yet the aſſigned effect of it occurred but twice in the ſame time, it would be a proof that the aſſigned cauſe was not the real cauſe of the effect in queſtion: and if the diſeaſe, the ſuppoſed effect, occurred oftener than its aſſigned cauſe was applied, it would be a proof that it proceeded, not from that, but from ſome other cauſe.

Theſe propoſitions, which appear abſtruſe and obſcure, perhaps even doubtful, when expreſſed in general terms, will be found perfectly intelligible, and obvious to every capacity, nay quite familiar to the thoughts of men, when illuſtrated by proper examples. The equinoxes, as every body knows, occur twice a-year. Some portion of ſcientific knowledge muſt be acquired before a perſon can underſtand what combination of cauſes produces that equality of day and night: but every ploughman and day-labourer, who has but common ſenſe, muſt be ſuppoſed to underſtand and believe that it depends on ſomething as its cauſe, which occurs twice a-year, and no oftener. New moon and full moon occur each of them between twelve and thirteen times in a year; and every perſon of common ſenſe muſt underſtand, that the cauſes of them reſpectively occur juſt as often in the year; and every

every ſuch perſon would perceive and be ſhocked with the abſurdity of ſuppoſing the equinoxes produced by a cauſe which occurred at leaſt once every month, and of ſuppoſing the changes of the moon, as they occur every month, to proceed from a cauſe which occurred only twice a-year. I preſume every perſon who knows that the tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four hours, whether he knows or does not know the combination of cauſes which produces this effect, muſt believe that ſuch combination of cauſes occurs juſt as often as its effect; and every perſon who knows that the time of the ebbing and flowing of the tide changes from day to day to all times of the day and night, muſt believe that the cauſe of ſuch ebbing and flowing varies as much and as regularly in the time of its recurrence.

In another point of view, the aſſertion, that the hoſpital-gangrene is frequent in *exact proportion* to the ſize of an hoſpital, neceſſarily excludes the influence of all other circumſtances, either as means of preventing it, or as ſecondary, concurrent, and acceſſory cauſes in producing it. For example, if, in conſequence of the *exact ſize* of this Infirmary, the hoſpital-gangrene rages in it like a plague exactly twice a-year, no degree of attention to cleanlineſs and ventilation, no care that can be employed to keep the patients in good pure air, to keep them from getting drunk, perhaps with whiſky, and from lying, perhaps in the ſtreets, expoſed to cold and wet when they are drunk, no care or ſkill in medical or chirurgical treatment, can prevent that horrid diſeaſe from raging like a plague juſt twice a-year. But, on the other hand, no degree of negligence with reſpect to cleanlineſs and ventilation, not even the utmoſt privation of pure good air that is conſiſtent with life, or the total want of clean linen to their perſons and beds, or the greateſt filthineſs in which they could be kept, or their getting drunk with whiſky ſix days of the week, could make the patients in this In-

firmary ſubject to the hoſpital-gangrene more frequently than twice a-year.

On the other hand, if it is admitted that theſe circumſtances, favourable or unfavourable, have any effect either in producing or preventing the hoſpital-gangrene, or in making it either more or leſs frequent than it would be in the oppoſite circumſtances; then *neceſſarily* Mr John Bell's propoſition at preſent under review *muſt* be falſe: that is to ſay, the diſeaſe in queſtion cannot be frequent in exact proportion to the ſize of an hoſpital. It then becomes a fair and rational ſubject of enquiry, by obſervations at leaſt, partly even by experiments, and ſtrict deduction from theſe, to aſcertain what and how great their effects are, and whether by due attention to thoſe things which are favourable, ſuch an hoſpital as this, or even one forty times as large, may be altogether preſerved from the prevalence of the hoſpital-gangrene in it, or at leaſt how near it is poſſible to come to this moſt deſirable end. It would be equally fair and rational to aſcertain by obſervation, though not by wilful or contrived experiments, whether the ſmalleſt hoſpital, eſpecially if it were crowded with patients, and theſe were kept very dirty and in bad air, might not be ſubject to the ravages of the hoſpital-gangrene very frequently.

Notwithſtanding his very confident aſſertion of the doctrine in queſtion, and their conduct in adopting and ſanctioning it, I doubt much whether Mr John Bell or his clients will think any ſuch obſervations or experiments neceſſary to enable them to judge what would be the reſult of ſuch an inveſtigation. I do not believe that any of them would heſitate even a moment to give the *proper* anſwers to ſuch queſtions as the following. Suppoſing the ſize of this Infirmary to remain as at preſent, but only twelve or fourteen patients to be received into it, and theſe patients to be laid only one in each ward, and all of them to have either

either wounds or ulcers, no matter whether from operation or accident; would theſe patients be ſubject to the hoſpital-gangrene twice in the year, or oftener, or ſeldomer; or would they be ſubject to it at all? If two or three, or at the utmoſt a very few patients, ſo as not nearly half to fill the wards, were received into them, and if they and the wards were kept uniformly clean and well ventilated, would ſuch patients be expoſed to the ravages of the hoſpital-gangrene? If all the wards in the Hoſpital were crowded to the utmoſt with ſuch patients, and theſe patients were allowed to remain as dirty, and in as foul air as poſſible, would they be exempt from the ravages of the hoſpital-gangrene, or would they be moſt deplorably ſubject to it? Laſtly, if, inſtead of a great hoſpital, a ſmall houſe, or even a ſingle bed-chamber of ordinary ſize, for example, a room of ſixteen feet ſquare, and ten high, were made the ſcene of obſervation and experiment, and if in ſuch a room ten or a dozen ſuch patients were laid, with no attention to ventilation and cleanlineſs; would the diſeaſe in queſtion never appear among them? And, on the contrary, if in ſuch a room only two or three patients were laid, and theſe were kept very clean, and in pure air, would they be ſubject to the hoſpital-gangrene? Theſe different views of the ſame queſtion I have ſtated at full length, not merely to explain and eſtabliſh that opinion, with reſpect to the origin and ſpreading of the hoſpital-gangrene, which, from all that I have read, and all that I have heard about it, I believe to be true; but much more in order to ſhow, that thoſe who had ſo boldly aſſerted a very different opinion with reſpect to it, had not believed the opinion which they aſſerted. If they think I do them any injuſtice, in this very unfavourable inference, they can eaſily refute it, and vindicate themſelves, which I ſhall be happy to ſee them do, by declaring explicitly, that they believe all thoſe inferences which correſpond with their doctrine are true, and will be found ſo

whenever they are tried experimentally; and on the other hand, that all thoſe inferences, to which I have alluded, which are inconſiſtent with their doctrine, appear to them falſe and incredible; and that they will be found falſe when brought to the teſt of obſervation and experiment. It will alſo be proper, for very obvious reaſons, that they ſhould authenticate ſuch declaration of their hoſpital-creed, by putting their names to it; elſe probably many people will be ſo fooliſh and incredulous, as to think it impoſſible that any individuals of the medical profeſſion ſhould be ſo ignorant, or ſo inſane, as to hold ſuch opinions. It may fairly be preſumed, notwithſtanding their acknowledged ignorance of logic, which Mr John Bell, in his own name and that of his clients, has moſt explicitly avowed in the 16th page of his firſt ſection, that none of them will attempt to maintain a propoſition, and yet deny its neceſſary conſequences; or will expect any credit for the belief which they expreſs, when they perceive intuitively, without the help of obſervation or experiment, that all the inferences from it are falſe.

I have no pretenſions, from my own experience, to offer any opinion with reſpect to the cauſes, the cure, or the prevention of hoſpital-gangrene: and I ſtrongly ſuſpect that many things relating to it ſtill remain to be aſcertained by obſervation, experiment, and ſtrict induction from theſe. From Dr Rollo's obſervations on this ſubject, it ſeems highly probable, if not quite certain, that, beſides the common well known eryſipelas, (in Scotland commonly called the *Roſe*, and in England, *St Anthony's Fire*), there are at leaſt two different *kinds* of hoſpital-gangrene; probably each produced by its own ſpecific cauſe, and capable of being propagated by its own peculiar contagion, unleſs this be prevented by cleanlineſs and ventilation. Perhaps further more enlarged and accurate obſervations may ſhew that there are *many* kinds (*genera* or *ſpecies*) of bad ſuppuration, as there certainly are

of

of inflammation; and that ſeveral of thoſe bad kinds of ſuppuration may ſpread by contagion in ill ventilated hoſpitals; as all of them may occaſionally be received into every hoſpital, or begin in any one, whether great or ſmall.

Whatever may be the reſult of ſuch ſpeculations and enquiries, I believe more than enough is already known, by ſad experience, of the hoſpital-gangrene, to enable us to pronounce with certainty, firſt, that it is *not* frequent in *exact* proportion, or in *any* proportion, to the ſize of an hoſpital; ſecondly, that it is frequent in hoſpitals, or particular wards of hoſpitals, *nearly* in the *inverſe* proportion of the ventilation and cleanlineſs preſerved in them reſpectively; that is, *almoſt* in the *direct* proportion of the badneſs of the air, and the dirtineſs in which the patients are kept: I ſay *nearly* and *almoſt* in theſe proportions; for I conceive it to be aſcertained that ſome other circumſtances have influence, though much leſs general and powerful influence than thoſe which I mentioned, in producing, or aſſiſting to produce, that terrible diſeaſe occaſionally in a few individuals. Many cauſes of general weakneſs, ſuch as previous or attending diſeaſes, intemperance, eſpecially in ſpirituous liquors, and ſometimes, as I think I have ſeen in more than one inſtance, ſevere, long continued, or frequently repeated courſes of mercury, ſeem to have had that effect. Or if thoſe examples of bad, ſpreading, gangrenous ulceration, which I have ſometimes ſeen under the improper uſe of mercury, be not proper inſtances of hoſpital-gangrene, at leaſt they are very like it, and the one kind of bad ſuppuration may very properly be employed to illuſtrate the other.

I have uſed alſo the general term *bad* or *foul* air, without preſuming to form any opinion of the number and nature of the various noxious effluvia with which the air in an hoſpital, or not in an hoſpital, may be loaded and tainted. I do not preſume even to judge how much of the bad effect to which I allude is

to

to be attributed to the great abundance of ſuch noxious effluvia blended with the air, and how much of it is owing to the want of a due proportion of that peculiar element, and conſtituent part of common air, which is immediately neceſſary to the ſupport of life and health, and which in one way or other ſeems to be conſumed and waſted by the functions of life, eſpecially by breathing. It ſeems more than probable, that both the deficiency of good air, and the great abundance of noxious effluvia, contribute to make the air in hoſpitals bad, noxious, and almoſt poiſonous, unleſs great and unremitting attention be given to ventilation and cleanlineſs: for the uſeful practical inference is the ſame on either ſuppoſition. I remember to have ſeen a calculation by ſome of the French Academicians, who endeavoured to make known, and of courſe to reform, ſome of the worſt abuſes that prevailed in the Hotel Dieu at Paris, particularly with reſpect to that moſt eſſential article, *air*. In this attempt they met with all poſſible oppoſition from thoſe who had the management of the hoſpital; but, in ſpite of them and their oppoſition, the philoſophers found means to aſcertain the dimenſions, length, breadth, and height, of one of the great wards, and alſo the number of patients who were kept in it. From theſe principles they proved, by an eaſy and ſatisfactory calculation, that if the ward had been made quite cloſe (hermetically ſealed) at night, all the patients in it *muſt* have been *dead* before morning. I have forgotten the exact number of hours, nor is that a point of any conſequence, in which they muſt all have periſhed, partly by the accumulation of their own bad effluvia, but ſtill more for want of the proper vital part of the air, which is conſumed in breathing, by every adult perſon, at the rate of about a gallon of common air in a minute, or a hogſhead in an hour. Every defect of that degree of ventilation and cleanlineſs which is neceſſary to preſerve people in health and vigour, is an *approach* to that poiſonous ſtate of the air, ſo well

pointed

pointed out by the French Academicians as the *neceſſary* and *ſpeedy* conſequence of *no ventilation at all.* Such an approach, from that very cauſe, may occur in a ward filled with ſurgery patients, as well as in a ward filled with patients wholly under the care of phyſicians. Nay, it is ſtill more likely to occur in a ward filled with ſurgery patients, when any of theſe, as muſt often happen, are affected with bad ulcers, carious bones, or common gangrene. We have even preciſe obſervations which prove that the jail or hoſpital fever, in its worſt form, has originated in a ſurgery ward, ſeemingly by the poiſonous effluvia proceeding from one mortified limb. (See Sir John Pringle's Obſervations on the Diſeaſes of the Army, edit. 6. 1768, page 15. and 288.).

As the air in a ſurgery ward is peculiarly liable to be tainted by ſuch very offenſive and noxious effluvia, ſtrict attention to ventilation and cleanlineſs, in order to prevent their accumulation and bad effects, muſt be at leaſt as neceſſary in wards under the ſole care of ſurgeons, as in thoſe which are entirely under the management of phyſicians. But I ſcarce think it will be aſſerted, and I am ſure it will not be believed, by any who have competent means of knowledge, that this has *always* been the caſe with the ſurgeons wards in this Hoſpital. I have even heard it maintained, as a kind of excuſe for a fact which could not be denied, that it was *impoſſible* to have the ſurgeons wards as well ventilated as thoſe of the phyſicians; partly by reaſon of the diſeaſes treated in them, partly becauſe the wards themſelves were not ſo high in the ceiling as the phyſicians wards. To this circumſtance there is a ſtrong alluſion in Mr John Bell's own pamphlet, ſect. 2. page 43. As to the former conſideration, I conſider it as the ſtrongeſt poſſible reaſon for paying the greateſt and moſt unremitting attention to cleanlineſs and ventilation in ſurgery wards; by which means there can be no doubt that all ſuch offenſiveneſs and danger as I allude to may effectually be prevented, though perhaps this will require

quire more care and labour than in medical wards. As to the ſecond circumſtance, the lowneſs of the ceiling of the ſurgeons wards, it ſeems to me of very little conſequence; for in the middle, and by far the greater part of them, the height of the ceiling is juſt the ſame as in the phyſicians wards, and it is only towards the ſides that the ſpace is a very little curtailed (perhaps *one hundredth* part) by the ſlope of the ceiling: and this, I conceive, muſt be fully compenſated by the ventilators which are placed in the middle of the roof, and which the phyſicians wards cannot have. At any rate, there are oppoſite windows in all thoſe wards, by which, if properly employed, abundant ventilation might be procured; more even than enough; more than would be proper or ſafe for all the patients. But this important point is not a mere matter of opinion. The two ſmall wards in the wings of the ſame attick ſtory with the ſurgeons wards, and which have the ſame height and form of the ceiling, have been found to admit of perfect ventilation and cleanlineſs, when under the management of the Phyſicians, even though filled with patients whoſe caſes required that attention the moſt; I mean patients labouring under contagious fevers. One of theſe ſmall wards is at preſent, and has been for ſeveral years, employed as the womens fever-ward; and is cleaner and better ventilated than moſt bed-chambers in Edinburgh. The oppoſite ſmall ward (commonly called the operation ward) which the ſurgeons have had the uſe of for ſeveral years, was for many years before employed as the mens fever-ward.

Another fact, equally in point, deſerves attention. For two years now, the indiſcriminate attendance of all the Surgeons in quick rotation has been aboliſhed; and a trial has been made of a more rational and permanent appointment of Surgeons to take charge of the ſurgery wards. In theſe two years, according to Mr John Bell's doctrine, of the hoſpital-gangrene being frequent in exact proportion to the ſize of an hoſpital, and being produced by infections

fections from the medical wards, and raging in this Infirmary twice a-year like a plague, it ought to have raged in it four times: but in fact it has not *raged*, nor *ſpread*, even once; and very few inſtances of it, and theſe very ſlight, have appeared in the ſurgeons wards: ſo few, and ſo ſlight, that they were not regarded as a ſerious evil.

In proof and illuſtration of what I have ſtated about the principal and moſt frequent cauſe of that very bad condition of wounds and ulcers, which has been termed hoſpital-ſore or gangrene, particularly of this horrid diſeaſe *not* being produced *ſpecifically* by infections from the medical wards, or even *excluſively* by morbid, corrupted, and accumulated effluvia from human bodies, whether under the care of Phyſicians or Surgeons, I muſt mention what has been obſerved of the ſimilar pernicious effects of another kind of bad air, in producing ulceration of the ſame, or, if poſſible, of a worſe kind. I allude to what has been experienced at Batavia, the air of which is ſuppoſed to be the worſt in the world, in conſequence of its being loaded with noxious effluvia from the neighbouring marſhes, and from the ſtagnating canals and ditches of the city. I quote the words of Dr Lind ſenior, of Haſlar Hoſpital: " And it was particularly obſerved, that the ſickneſs " raged with the greateſt violence when the rains abated, and the " ſun had evaporated the water in the ditches, ſo that the mud " began to appear. The ſtench from the mud was then intole- " rable. Nor was the ſickneſs at that time confined to the ſhips: " the whole city afforded a ſcene of diſeaſe and death; ſtreets " crowded with funerals, bells tolling from morning to night, and " horſes jaded with dragging the dead in hearſes to their graves.

" At that time, a ſlight cut of the ſkin, the leaſt ſcratch of " a nail, or the moſt inconſiderable wound, turned quickly into " a putrid ſpreading ulcer, which in twenty-four hours conſumed " the fleſh even to the bone. This fact is ſo extraordinary, that " upon a ſingle teſtimony credit would hardly be given to it; yet

" on board the *Medway* and *Panther* they had the moſt fatal ex-
" perience of it, and ſuffered much from it." (Eſſay on Diſeaſes incident to Europeans in hot Climates, Ed. 1768, page 86, 7.).

Thoſe alone who have ſeen the ſtate of wounds and ulcers in the bad air of Batavia, as well as that which occurs in ill ventilated hoſpitals, and who have compared them in all their circumſtances, can judge whether they are juſt the ſame diſeaſe or not. Suppoſing them different, I ſhould think it very fooliſh to call the one of them the Java ſore or Batavia gangrene, as the other is called the hoſpital ſore or gangrene, for as much as it cannot be doubted, that, wherever the air is equally tainted with the ſame kind of effluvia, the ſame bad ſtate of wounds and ulcers will be produced. And it is at leaſt poſſible, and to me it ſeems probable, that the noxious effluvia from the canals of Batavia, and the foul air of an hoſpital loaded with effluvia from the human body, though differing in kind as well as degree of badneſs, and producing *ſpecifically* different diſeaſes of the febrile kind, may yet agree in producing nearly or exactly the ſame bad kind of ulceration, as they do in producing weakneſs, languor, and a pale ſallow complexion and ſqualid appearance of the whole body. The feeble languid conſtitutions, and bloodleſs faces, of the inhabitants of Batavia, ſo generally remarked by all who have ſeen them, ſeem to differ more in degree than in kind from the correſponding circumſtances in thoſe who have been long confined in ill ventilated jails or hoſpitals. But the fevers produced by the two kinds of bad air are radically different in their ſymptoms and method of cure, as well as in their cauſes. The jail or hoſpital fever, as it is called, is continued and contagious; the Batavian fever is remittent, or the worſt kind of intermittent, and no more contagious than a tertian ague is in this country; but withal ſo virulent, that, as Dr Lind tells us, " ſome were ſeized ſuddenly with a delirium, and " died in the firſt fit; but none ſurvived the third."

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The difficulty to which I alluded in the paragraph quoted from my former Memorial, is that of prevailing on the ſervants of the Hoſpital, the nurſes, and even the patients themſelves, to do, or allow to be done, what is really neceſſary for their own ſafety and welfare. Not one of them can be perſuaded that ſuch ventilation and cleanlineſs as I allude to, is neceſſary, or good, or even ſafe for them; and if, by a kind of miracle, all the nurſes, and all the patients, were convinced of this, ſtill they would almoſt equally diſlike the irkſome and conſtant labour required to put it in practice. I am ſorry to ſay, that, to my certain knowledge, this kind of ignorance and obſtinacy is not confined to the nurſes and ſervants of the Hoſpital. I have met with it in ſome Students, who, notwithſtanding the ſtrongeſt admonitions and intreaties that I could employ, would perſiſt in expoſing themſelves, abſurdly and unneceſſarily, to the effluvia proceeding from the bodies of patients labouring under bad fevers, becauſe they would not believe that ſuch fevers were contagious. Two years are not yet elapſed, ſince a misfortune of this kind happened, in the clinical ward, under my own immediate care. Many of my pupils, as I afterwards learned, held very cheap all my good advice and admonitions: the conſequence was, that very ſoon *eight* of them caught the fever, *two* of whom died of it. Yet after all, ſome of them, I believe, are not yet cured of their favourite doctrine, that the ſaid fever was not contagious. This opinion is one of the moſt ſplendid examples of the ſpirit of medical warfare that has occurred for many years: it began in America, near ten years ago, on occaſion of the yellow fever which raged at Philadelphia in 1793. From America it ſpread to the Weſt Indies, from the Weſt Indies to England, from England to Egypt; and how far it will ſpread, and when it will ceaſe, I cannot even gueſs; probably not for many generations. The accumulated weight of the moſt complete evidence, reſulting from the accurate and concurrent obſervations

of many of the beſt Phyſicians that ever lived, from the days of Sir John Pringle and Dr Lind, who were obſerving and writing near ſixty years ago, down even to the preſent hour, appears to have been ſet aſide with as much eaſe, and as little ceremony, as the moſt viſionary hypotheſis that ever was advanced in Phyſic. I know too well the ſpirit of medical diſputants, to ſuppoſe it poſſible, that any obſervations or reaſonings of mine ſhould have the ſmalleſt weight in ſuch a controverſy: but I may reaſonably hope that the Managers of this Hoſpital, at leaſt, will pay much regard to the deciſive experience already obtained in it, of the uniform beneficial influence of the fever-wards; in which, by a regular ſyſtem of ventilation and cleanlineſs, the ſpreading of ſuch fevers among the other patients is prevented, and the danger of them ſo much leſſened, that of the patients ill of fevers received into thoſe wards, at leaſt fifteen out of ſixteen are ſoon reſtored in health and vigour to their families and their country. This fact I wiſh to be generally known, for the benefit of all concerned; and eſpecially in hopes that it may induce the poor when ſick of fevers, to go to the Hoſpital as early as poſſible; and alſo that it may induce the benevolent who are in more affluent circumſtances, to urge that ſalutary advice to them with all their influence: for in this way, and in no other that I am acquainted with, the ſpreading of the fever in their families, and among their neighbours, may be prevented, and their own chance of recovery may be brought *almoſt to certainty*. As this opinion, and even the peculiar expreſſion which I have employed to convey it, may be made matter of reprehenſion and reproach to me, it is neceſſary to explain fully, that I do not mean to ſay that every caſe, without exception, of continued fever received into the fever-wards of this or any other hoſpital, will neceſſarily or certainly be either ſpeedily cured, or at leaſt brought in no long time to a favourable termination. I am ſenſible that, in ſome caſes, from the peculiar virulence of the

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cauſe producing the fever; in others, from the peculiarly unfavourable ſtate of the patient's conſtitution before the invaſion of the fever; in others, from ſtrong concurrent cauſes, of a very unfavourable kind, applied along with the primary cauſe of the fever, the violence and danger of it, even from the firſt, may be incomparably greater than uſual; may be ſuch even as to baffle all the powers of medicine, or at leaſt all the ſkill and care of the beſt Phyſicians: juſt as happens in a few unfavourable inſtances of the ſmall pox; perhaps even in thoſe in whom it has been produced by inoculation. But I am well convinced, both from my own obſervation, and from the concurrent opinion and experience of other Phyſicians on the ſame ſubject, that ſuch caſes are very rare, and that by far the greater number of caſes of continued fever that prove fatal, do ſo in conſequence of neglect or miſmanagement after the diſeaſe has begun, and above all from the patient's not being allowed the benefit of pure cool air, and uniform cleanlineſs, in the courſe of the diſeaſe. Without meaning in the leaſt to call in queſtion the efficacy of various remedies which are properly and generally employed in the cure of continued fevers, ſometimes with complete and immediate ſucceſs, I declare with confidence, that I would much rather undertake the cure of any number of ſuch patients, with the help of cleanlineſs, pure cool air, and cold water, without any medicines, than with the help of all the medicines in the diſpenſatory, without the help of thoſe ſimple articles of regimen. Nor is my opinion in this reſpect ſingular: many other Phyſicians, who have had equal or better opportunities of obſervation in this and other hoſpitals, agree with me in thinking, that the regimen to which I allude is more than half the cure. Of this indeed we have often good proof and illuſtration, in the great and favourable change obſerved in ſuch patients, in a few hours after they are laid in the wards of this Hoſpital, and before they get any powerful medicines, or perhaps any

medicines

medicines at all. But to judge rightly of this point, it is neceſſary to attend to the contraſt between the ſpeedy relief, and in moſt caſes the perfect recovery of ſuch patients, and the aggravated ſtate of the diſeaſe, and all its horrid ſymptoms, in thoſe patients who remain in their own wretched, dirty, ill-aired habitations. To many of theſe patients it is fatal; in ſome inſtances whole families have been cut off by it; and in many caſes, though it has not been fatal to any individual of a family, it has brought miſery and ruin on them all, by its long continuance in the father or mother, on whoſe daily labour and conſtant care the family depended for its ſupport; and who, by ſuch a diſeaſe are often diſabled, for many weeks, ſometimes for months, from earning bread for themſelves and their children. Nor is this all; for almoſt certainly ſuch a fever will ſpread by contagion to ſeveral, very probably to all, the members of the family; and perhaps to other families in their neighbourhood, any individuals of which have intercourſe with the ſick perſons, in the foul tainted air of their common dwellings. Now, moſt or all of theſe evils may be almoſt certainly prevented, by ſending the patients attacked with fever to the Hoſpital as early as poſſible; and by promoting ventilation and cleanlineſs, to the utmoſt, in the habitations whence they were removed. I have already mentioned, that the proportion of thoſe who die, to thoſe who recover from ſuch fevers in the Hoſpital, is as one to fifteen. But of thoſe who die of ſuch fevers in the Hoſpital, a very large proportion indeed, to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, at leaſt nine out of ten, have been ill of the diſeaſe from five or ſix to ten or twelve days before they came into the Hoſpital; and during this time had been miſerably neglected or miſmanaged; and in conſequence of this were paſt all poſſibility of cure. Of this indeed ſome of them have afforded a ſad proof, by dying before they could be laid in their beds; and others of them, when firſt examined in the Hoſpital, were found to have already the worſt

ſymptoms

ſymptoms of the diſeaſe, ſuch as are known to be almoſt or certainly fatal. From theſe principles I do not heſitate to infer, that if patients in fevers were uniformly brought to the Hoſpital very ſoon after the invaſion of the diſeaſe, inſtead of one in fifteen, probably not one in a hundred of them would die of their diſeaſe; in other words, probably 990 out of 1000 ſuch patients would ſoon be reſtored to health and ſtrength: and what is of ſtill more conſequence, probably not the tenth or twentieth part of the number of ſuch fevers which at preſent occur among the lower orders, would then take place. It does not appear to me impoſſible almoſt to extirpate ſuch fevers among the lower orders of people; at leaſt to put an end to them, as either conſtantly prevalent, (endemic), or occaſionally ſpreading, (epidemic), diſeaſes: in plain Engliſh, I think they may be made as rare among the lower, as they have long been among the higher orders of people: and I doubt much whether an hoſpital, or any number of wards in it that may be required for this purpoſe, can in any other way be employed ſo much for the benefit of the public. Of 1000 patients received into an hoſpital on account of many other very common diſeaſes, conſumption, palſy, epilepſy, dropſy, and all the miſerable effects of dram-drinking, ſo ſmall a proportion can ever be reſtored to health and ſtrength, or made again uſeful to their families or the public, that I dare not venture to give it a name. After more than thirty years attentive medical obſervation of the ſituation of the lower orders in this city, I am fully convinced, that the common continued fever is the greateſt evil to which they are expoſed, except one: this one every perſon, who has attended to their ſituation, muſt know, is the uſe of diſtilled ſpirits; which is equally deſtructive to their induſtry, their morals, and their health; and certainly ruinous to them in mind, body, and eſtate.

The preceding obſervations with reſpect to fever-wards and fever-patients in an hoſpital, I have ſtated minutely and ſtrongly; becauſe

becauſe I am ſure, that what Mr John Bell has ſaid about the Surgeons patients being expoſed to infections from the medical wards, will be underſtood to relate particularly, if not excluſively, to the fever-wards: Perhaps this was intended by him; but whether it was or not, it will be ſuppoſed that it was. Thoſe are the medical wards, in which the ignorant ſuppoſe, and the malicious, including ſome very keen medical diſputants, pretend, that infections are the moſt abundant, moſt virulent, and moſt dangerous. Beſides, one of the fever-wards, the womens, is near to one of the Surgeons wards, being on the ſame ſtory, and ſeparated only by the ſtaircaſe: and formerly, for many years, the caſe was the ſame with the mens fever-ward. Moreover, for ſome years paſt, fever-wards, fever-hoſpitals, and houſes of recovery, (as they are called), have been *teterrima belli cauſa* among our moſt noble faculty: for while ſome of our moſt ſpirited diſputants here have maintained that fevers were not contagious, and have nobly died martyrs to this *anti-contagioniſt* faith, others, as became them, have gone completely to the oppoſite extreme, and have maintained, that fevers were ſo dreadfully contagious, that the effluvia from patients ill of them might produce the diſeaſe in others at the diſtance even of many miles, and probably would do ſo very generally at the diſtance of ſome hundreds of yards. Theſe keen *contagioniſts*, according to the laudable cuſtom of medical diſputants, choſe to overlook completely the plaineſt neceſſary conſequences of their own doctrine; eſpecially the obvious conſideration, that if ſuch were the caſe, no human power could prevent the fever from ſpreading through every town, and almoſt through every country, in which even a ſingle inſtance of it occurred. But they did not fail to perceive, that ſuch being the inveterate and far-ſpreading nature of febrile contagion, a fever-ward in an hoſpital, or a fever-hoſpital or houſe of recovery in a town, muſt be a perpetual ſource of diſeaſe and death to all the other

other patients in ſuch an hoſpital, and all the inhabitants of ſuch a town. For certain purpoſes, which I can only gueſs at, and therefore ſhall not preſume to mention, thoſe horrible apprehenſions were proclaimed with ſuch ardent zeal and unceaſing clamour, that the peaceable well-meaning inhabitants of ſome towns, who had no notion of the ſpirit of medical warfare, were frightened almoſt or altogether out of their wits. To this hour, many of them firmly believe that a fever-ward, or a fever-hoſpital, is neceſſarily a great reſervoir or magazine of the moſt virulent contagion; the effluvia from which may be noxious at leaſt, if not fatal at a great diſtance. But the very reverſe of this is the truth: Such a ward or hoſpital is juſt a contrivance, and the beſt or only one hitherto known, for preventing the accumulation and virulence of ſuch effluvia, which is nearly equivalent to preventing the production of them. It is abundantly aſcertained, that thoſe effluvia are dangerous, as proceeding directly from the bodies of patients ill of ſuch fevers; ſtill worſe when they are accumulated in their chambers for want of proper ventilation; worſt of all when retained and concentrated in their clothes, or in any kind of ſoft furniture, ſometimes even as adhering to hard furniture, or to the walls, the floor, or the ceiling of a room. But it is equally well aſcertained, that where there is even moderate ventilation, the ſame effluvia, as coming directly from the body of the patient, are not noxious even at the diſtance of a few feet; and that, by thorough ventilation, and great cleanlineſs, and care in changing frequently the clothes of a patient's perſon or bed, in waſhing them with due precautions, in waſhing even the patient's own body, in waſhing or white-waſhing the walls, the roof, and the floor of the chamber in which ſuch a patient has lain, all danger of infection is effectually prevented. It is even a rare occurrence in this city, for ſuch a fever to ſpread in any family of the higher orders, with that degree of ventilation and cleanlineſs which is generally preſerved in their

houſes: indeed it is ſo rare an occurrence, that, were it not for the ſad examples often ſeen in the houſes of the lower orders, many people would not believe that the common fever is at all contagious. In fever-wards, all thoſe circumſtances of ventilation and cleanlineſs, equally beneficial to the patients and thoſe who have the care of them, are conſtantly and ſtrictly attended to. I believe they would be found almoſt univerſally ſufficient: but, in caſe of need, additional means of ſafety are employed; ſuch as fumigations of different kinds, ſeveral of which are conſidered by thoſe who have tried them moſt as highly efficacious: but, as always happens in phyſic, they have become ſubjects of keen, and probably of endleſs diſputes. Whatever may become of theſe diſputes, and of the chemical queſtions concerning the nature of the contagious effluvia, and the mode of operation of the different fumes employed to correct them, on the principle either of compoſition or decompoſition, one great point at leaſt muſt remain certain, and plain and intelligible to every capacity, I mean the neceſſary effect of ventilation. This is juſt the diffuſion of the noxious effluvia in a great quantity of pure air; and is perfectly analogous to the diffuſion of many other ſubſtances in pure water. In numberleſs caſes the effect of ſuch diffuſion is obvious to our ſenſes: thus one pint of ink diffuſed in a gallon of water, will impart to it a very conſiderable tinge of black; but if the ſame quantity of ink were diffuſed in ſeveral tons of water, ſtill better if diffuſed in a ſmall rivulet, the black tinge would no longer be perceptible to the quickeſt ſight. One pint of the ſtrong vitriolic acid diffuſed in many gallons of water, will make the whole of it very ſour: but if it were diluted with many tons of water, or thrown into a ſtream of running water, its ſourneſs could no longer be perceived. All the ſmoke of London, and all the fragrance of Edinburgh, become imperceptible to our ſenſes at the diſtance of only a few miles from thoſe immenſe maſſes of noxious effluvia. The caſe is the ſame

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with thoſe ſubſtances, which in their concentrated ſtate produce the moſt violent effects, perhaps even mortal diſeaſes, in the human body; and yet when diluted may be employed with ſafety; may even have pleaſant or ſalutary effects; or, if very much diluted, may have no perceptible effects. A large draught of pure ſtrong brandy may kill a man in a moment: a few ſmall draughts of ſuch brandy will ſoon make a man dead drunk; and any man may ſoon get drunk by drinking brandy diluted with five or even ten times its quantity of water. But I conceive it will require ſome genius to get drunk with brandy diluted with forty times its quantity of water: and if it were diluted with a thouſand or ten thouſand times its quantity of water, a man might drink of it till he burſt, without making the ſmalleſt progreſs towards getting drunk. A few grains of arſenic diſſolved in a quart of water, will form a beverage, one draught of which will prove certainly fatal; but if the ſame quantity of arſenic is diſſolved in twenty or thirty quarts of water, a man may take two or three draughts of ſuch a liquor daily, for a week, without any danger or inconvenience; and if he had an intermittent fever before he began to it, he would be cured of that diſeaſe in a few days. The ſame quantity of arſenic diſſolved in many tons of water, would produce no effect whatever on the human body, in any quantity in which a perſon could drink it. The caſe I believe is preciſely the ſame with thoſe vapours, effluvia, or volatile matters, which being diffuſible in the air, may in it be diluted to any degree, and when much diluted become perfectly innocent, although when concentrated and ſtrong they would have been abſolutely poiſonous, and even ſuddenly fatal. A conſiderable quantity of carbonic gas, commonly called fixed air, or of hydrogene gas, commonly called inflammable air, may be mixed with the common air that we breathe without the ſmalleſt danger to life, or any injury even to health. Nearly three fourths of common atmoſpheric air conſiſts of a matter, (azote), which, if breathed

pure, would be certainly and almoſt inſtantly fatal; yet when diluted with little more than a third part of its own quantity of a different kind of gas or air, (oxygen), it forms the moſt wholeſome air for breathing. It has even been thought by ſome phyſicians, that a conſiderable quantity of thoſe poiſonous airs or vapours, moderately diluted with common air, may be very ſalutary in ſeveral diſeaſes; eſpecially in the moſt common and fatal of all diſeaſes in this country, conſumption. I preſume any ordinary perſon, however little ſkilled in chemiſtry, will underſtand, that if any ward of this Hoſpital were made cloſe, and a very few ounces of ſulphur were burned in it, every breathing animal in that ward would ſoon be killed by the poiſonous ſuffocating vapour of that mineral; but ſurely no perſon of common ſenſe can believe, that if the doors and windows of ſuch a ward were thrown open before ſuch fumigation were begun, or during the performing of it, the vapours of the ſulphur could reach any of the other wards, in ſuch concentration and force, as to produce any diſeaſes in the patients in theſe wards. As little can I believe, that the effluvia from patients in the fever-wards, prevented as they are from being accumulated by conſtant attention to cleanlineſs, and diluted and diffuſed in much air by conſtant ventilation, can ever be hurtful to the patients in the ſurgeons wards: and I know in fact, that there has never been the ſmalleſt proof or ſuſpicion of their being hurtful to the patients in the phyſicians wards, who are at leaſt as much expoſed to them, as thoſe under the care of the Surgeons. I heartily wiſh I could be as well aſſured, that equal ſecurity could be given by any other means to the other patients in the Hoſpital, when perſons ill of ſuch fevers are laid in the common wards, or to the other inhabitants of ſuch houſes as are generally occupied by the lower orders of people, when even one of the family is attacked by that diſeaſe. That ſuch ſecurity, even in thoſe circumſtances, may be attained by very ſtrict attention to ventilation and cleanlineſs,

lineſs, I am well convinced; for by theſe means I have generally ſucceeded, both in private houſes, and in the clinical wards of this Hoſpital. I can well believe that others have been more uniformly ſucceſsful in that reſpect than I have been; but I think it right to acknowledge, that, after all the care I could take to prevent the ſpreading of the contagion, I have ſeveral times been diſappointed. The reſult of my own experience is, that all the ventilation and cleanlineſs, not that *can*, but that generally *will* be employed in the common wards of an hoſpital, does not give that complete ſecurity to the other patients, which may be certainly attained by laying thoſe ill of fevers in ſeparate wards; and that the chance of preventing the contagion from ſpreading from one perſon ill of the fever to others of the ſame family, among the lower orders of people, is ſtill more precarious. I ſhould think it right, that, by a ſtanding order of the Managers, ſuch patients ſhould not be admitted into the common wards of this Infirmary; nay, that any patient in theſe wards attacked with ſuch a fever after his admiſſion, as muſt often happen in conſequence of his having been previouſly expoſed to the cauſes of the fever, ſhould be removed from the common ward, into the one allotted for fever patients, or at leaſt into ſome of the private rooms connected with the different wards, ſo as to cut off all communication between him and the other patients. With reſpect to the ſick poor in their own dwellings, it is in vain to propoſe regulations which cannot be enforced; but they may at leaſt be encouraged and inſtructed to do what is right; nor ſhould I think it a very difficult matter to make them underſtand, that inſtead of going into a great reſervoir of infections, when they are admitted into the fever-wards of the Hoſpital, they are in fact going out of ſuch a reſervoir, which they had produced, and were producing, in their own houſes: and, with reſpect to the public at large, I ſhould think it might be ſtill more eaſy to eſtabliſh the important doctrine, that,

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if ſuch fevers are contagious, which I firmly believe, then, on the plan propoſed, there very ſoon would not be left the hundredth part of the magazines of that contagion which there have long been ſcattered all over this city. Before I quit the ſubject of that theory of the origin of the hoſpital-gangrene, which Mr John Bell and his clients have ſo ſtrongly aſſerted and ſanctioned, I think it right to ſtate the very preciſe and accurate obſervations of two different authors with reſpect to it. The firſt of theſe is Dr John Rollo, ſurgeon-general to the Royal Artillery, who, in a treatiſe, entitled, " A ſhort account of a morbid poiſon acting on ſores, " and of the method of deſtroying it," deſcribes minutely the ſtate of a ſore, firſt, when acted upon by eryſipelas; ſecondly, that of a ſore ſuppoſed to be peculiar to hoſpitals, or what is called the hoſpital ſore or gangrene; thirdly, that of a ſore when acted upon by what he ſuppoſed to be a new ſpecies of morbid poiſon. Whatever may be thought of the accuracy of his obſervations, or the juſtneſs of his reaſonings on theſe points, it ſeems at leaſt abundantly plain, that thoſe ſeveral bad conditions of ſores which he deſcribes were not produced by infections from the medical wards of this or any other hoſpital: for they occurred in the Brigade of Royal Horſe-Artillery ſoon after its formation: when " many " accidents occurred, eſpecially in kicks on the legs of the men by " the horſes feet; and being generally on the ſhin, very unpleaſant " ſores were produced." So frequent were theſe accidents, that at one time they had ſeldom leſs than forty caſes of ſores in the hoſpital.

The ſecond of thoſe authors, whoſe obſervations on this ſubject I beg leave to quote, is one whoſe authority I am ſure Mr John Bell will not diſpute; namely, the ſaid Mr John Bell himſelf: who in his ſplendid work, entitled, " The Principles of Surgery," publiſhed here a few months after his Anſwer to me, and the greater part of which muſt have been written, and probably printed, before

fore his Anſwer to me was written or thought of, has favoured the world with what may reaſonably be ſuppoſed his real opinion of the nature and cauſe of the hoſpital-ſore: at leaſt he has given us many obſervations with reſpect to it, a minute deſcription of its appearance and progreſs, and even an excellent coloured print, repreſenting, far better than any words can do, the horror of the diſeaſe, and the deplorable ſituation of thoſe whom it attacks. His obſervations ſeem to have been made chiefly on the men who had been wounded in the memorable engagement between the Engliſh and Dutch fleets, under the Admirals Duncan and De Winter, on the 11th of October 1797. The ſcene of his obſervations ſeems to have been the hoſpital at Yarmouth. He tells us expreſsly, that "there is no hoſpital, however ſmall, airy, or well regulated, where "this epidemic ulcer is not to be found at times; and then no ope-"ration dare be performed! every cure ſtands ſtill! every wound "becomes a ſore, and every ſore is apt to run into gangrene:" then follows a noble philippic on its prevalence in the Hotel Dieu at Paris. (page 108). As to the cauſes of ſuch a ſore, he mentions, that a patient "had been often drunk, was frequently "revelling all night in the ſtreets, and when day-light approach-"ed, he ſcrambled over the hoſpital-wall, or through the ditch "full of mud. Frequent debauches, and the cold of winter, ex-"poſed him to the infection of the houſe; he was weakened, fell "ſick, the hoſpital-ſore ſpread over his thigh to a moſt dreadful "degree, but wine and opiates, and careful living, brought him "right again." (page 111).

Then, after deſcribing at great length the appearance and progreſs of the diſeaſe, and reaſoning with much ſubtilty about the nature of it, he tells us, "theſe are the conſequences, not of that infection "only which we call the hoſpital-gangrene, but of every debilita-"ting cauſe. Drunkenneſs and debauchery, ſtomach-complaints, "vomiting, diarrhœa, low ſpirits, the return of an old intermit-

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" tent fever, the infection of dyſentery, any debilitating cauſe, " will produce a change in the appearance of a wound. But this " infection of the hoſpital is the moſt irreſiſtible of all." Further, he tells us, " Thus we ſee this diſeaſe confined within the " walls of an hoſpital, nor does it always extend farther than a " ſingle ward. In Yarmouth, the Engliſh ſeamen who were " wounded on the 11th of October, were divided from three hun- " dred wounded men of the Dutch, by a wall only; the great " wards were on the oppoſite ſides of the partition under one roof; " on the one ſide of that partition we operated on men and boys, " opened ſinuſes, or ſearched for balls or pieces of ſhot, as freely as " in the moſt healthy hoſpital, or in ſick-quarters; not a ſore was to " be ſeen there, except ſuch as were the inevitable conſequence of " gun-ſhot wounds, with carious bones. But on the other ſide of " the partition wall, were ſuch ſores as are ſeldom to be ſeen, pro- " hibiting all operations, even the moſt trivial." (page 115. and 116).

If I had been left at liberty to contrive an account of the hoſpital-gangrene, with a view to ſhow that it was not produced in the ſurgeons patients in this Infirmary by infections from the medical wards, I could have contrived nothing ſtronger for that purpoſe than what Mr John Bell himſelf has given us, in that great work from which the preceding paſſages are ſelected. In his whole diſquiſition on the ſubject, extending to twelve ſwinging quarto pages, no ſuch opinion is aſſerted, or even inſinuated; and the whole tenor of his obſervations irreſiſtibly implies, that the diſeaſe in queſtion might be produced, and was produced, in ſurgeons patients not expoſed to any infections from medical wards; nay, even that it might occur, and at that time actually did occur, in ſome of the wards, but not in all of them, that were filled with ſurgery-patients, and under the peculiar or ſole management of ſurgeons. It does not even appear that there

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were at that time in the naval hoſpital at Yarmouth any medical wards, whence infections could be derived; but if there had been ſuch wards in that town, and in that hoſpital, this would not account for the dreadful diſeaſe in queſtion prevailing in one ward, and not in another, both of them filled with wounded men, both of them under the ſame roof, and ſeparated only by a partition-wall. It will be admitted by every perſon who knows what phyſical reaſoning is, that the hoſpital-ſore prevailing at that time in ſome and not others of the wards of the Yarmouth hoſpital, occurring ſometimes, but not always, in the artillery-hoſpital at Woolwich, occurring and ſpreading ſometimes, but not always, in the ſurgeons wards of the Hoſpital at Edinburgh, muſt proceed from ſome cauſe common to all thoſe hoſpitals, or wards of hoſpitals, at thoſe times, and not from any thing peculiar to this Hoſpital, at all times, or at any time, ſuch as the vicinity of the medical to the ſurgical wards, or the peculiar condition of the former.

But great and ſtupendous as is their proficiency in logical and phyſical ſcience, the attainments of Mr John Bell and his clients in practical morality are ſtill more aſtoniſhing, and more edifying. To judge rightly of their ſingular merit in this reſpect, candour requires that, in the firſt place, we ſhould ſuppoſe that they *bona fide* believed what they had aſſerted and ſanctioned: for the ſuppoſition, that they had aſſerted or ſanctioned what they knew to be falſe, is ſo unfavourable to them, that it ought not to be admitted, or even thought of, without abſolute neceſſity. Admitting then, for the ſake of argument, that every thing which, in his Anſwer to me, Mr John Bell has ſaid of the hoſpital-gangrene, is literally true, and by him, and all his clients, and all his profeſſional brethren, believed or known to be ſo, let *us* conſider, or rather let *them* conſider, what their own conduct has been. From year to year, from generation to generation, they have *connived* at that horrible abomination; they have allowed it to continue,

without even attempting to get it corrected, which it was their duty to have done as ſoon as they diſcovered the nature and ſource of it. The means of making this attempt were completely in their power: every Surgeon who attended in the Hoſpital, indeed every Surgeon in Edinburgh, had eaſy acceſs to the Managers: by the charter of the Infirmary, at leaſt *two* members of the College of Surgeons, but, if there be no Profeſſor of Anatomy, then three of them, muſt always be Managers of this Hoſpital. If there had been any occaſion for it, a unanimous reſolution, and moſt urgent application, of the whole Royal College of Surgeons on that intereſting ſubject, might have been preſented to the Managers; but theſe could not, and durſt not have diſregarded any information or requeſt on ſuch a ſubject, to which every conſideration of honour, of duty, of humanity, required that they ſhould pay the moſt prompt attention. When at laſt, after ſilently ſubmitting to that grievance for more than half a century, and quietly permitting and conniving at the moſt cruel ſufferings of many of their own patients, and the miſerable death of ſeveral of them, they declare how cruelly their patients have been treated in this Infirmary, their complaint of theſe evils is not addreſſed privately to the Managers, in order to get them rectified without delay; it is proclaimed to the public in a manner the beſt ſuited to excite general indignation and horror at the management of this Hoſpital, and, by neceſſary conſequence, at the Phyſicians and the Managers of it. It cannot even be pretended that it was from any ſtrong ſenſe of the greatneſs of the evil, and the neceſſity and *difficulty* of getting it ſpeedily reformed, that they took this violent and unneceſſary meaſure: for they did it not *ex mero motu*, but on occaſion of their being irritated by my former Memorial, and by my making generally known ſome circumſtances of the conduct of their department in this Hoſpital, which I regarded as great and notorious evils, and wiſhed to reform, and which they profeſs to think no evils at all, and wiſh to continue. They cannot pretend that

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the object of the Anſwer to my former Memorial was to get a *ſpeedy reform* of that evil which they proclaimed ſo loudly; for their object avowedly was to get the former ſyſtem continued. They cannot even pretend that they did not ſee the practical inference neceſſarily reſulting from their own ſtate of the caſe; for they mention it intelligibly enough, but ſlightly, rather ſlurring it over than urging it, and at leaſt putting it off *ſine die*. " No, Gentlemen," (ſays the eloquent Mr John Bell), " we will repreſent, truly and " impartially, the humane and very happy conſequences reſulting, " not from an oppoſite but a ſeparate hoſpital! which, were your " funds equal to the undertaking, we ſhould think it our duty this " day to adviſe." Then follows the pathetic enumeration of all the evils to which they, or rather their patients, are expoſed, by the very eſtabliſhment of this Hoſpital, and by their predeceſſors, in the time of Deacon Kennedy & Co. uniting their ſeparate Surgeons Hoſpital with the Royal Infirmary.

" There are innumerable diſtreſſes reſulting from the preſent " combination of the medical and ſurgical inſtitutes, and one eſpe- " cially which can never be done away. Our ſurgical hoſpital is " in the higheſt, and not the moſt lofty, nor pleaſant apartments " of the Hoſpital. Every man whoſe limbs are fractured and la- " cerated muſt be carried up many flights of ſtairs: our operations " are performed where patients, expecting the time of their own " operations, are ſtupified with the cries of thoſe who are ſuffer- " ing operations. Our ſurgical wards, ſometimes neglected by " ſtudents, are often crowded with the idle and curious, with " thoſe who are indifferent to ſurgery; and they flow in upon us, " chiefly when the caſes are intereſting, and patients ill able to " bear the din, not of the regular ſtudents of ſurgery, but of a " whole univerſity of ſtudents. Surgery is not regarded as a par- " ticular ſtudy, but a piece of idle curioſity, and ſtudents come " to ſee, rather than to be informed: The ſtudies of ſurgery and

" medicine are not duly divided." Then he proceeds to tell us, that " worſe than all, their patients are expoſed to infections " from the medical wards, and eſpecially to a diſeaſe, the hoſ- " pital-ſore," &c. as already quoted, (page 324.). It is plain, from the whole tenor of his diſcourſe in this moſt intereſting paſſage, that he thinks the Surgeons entitled to claim great merit with the Managers and the public for their long forbearance, in allowing their patients to be expoſed for more than half a century to all theſe numerous, horrid, and complicated evils, without any attempt on the part of the Surgeons to remonſtrate with the Managers on the ſubject, or by any means whatever to get them corrected. They plainly are not things indifferent to the Managers, to the public, or to any perſon who has the underſtanding and the feelings of a man: they are ſurely not ſtated with a view to make himſelf, and his brethren, and his predeceſſors for ſixty years, odious and infamous in the eſtimation of the public; nor can it even be believed that he and his clients, whoſe vote of thanks related *expreſsly*, and moſt particularly, to that part of his pamphlet, were ſenſible that ſuch infallibly muſt be the effect of their own aſſertions if any credit was given to them. Their great or only anxiety, for more than ſixty years, has been to eſtabliſh and to preſerve all thoſe horrid abuſes, by his own account ſo deſtructive to the patients; but at the ſame time to ſecure permiſſion to every Member of their College to have his own equal ſhare of that dreadful practice, which it was originally maintained they all required at firſt to make them expert operators, but which, according to their own account, could not have been for the good of the patients, and muſt have been fatal to many of them, by reaſon of the very unfavourable circumſtances in which they were placed, and the poiſonous infections to which they were expoſed.

But, as if he had been reſolved to leave nothing doubtful on ſo intereſting a point, Mr John Bell takes care, in the two following paragraphs,

paragraphs, to ſtate, by way of contraſt to the evils which the Surgeons and their patients have ſuffered in the Infirmary, many of the great advantages which they, and their patients, and the public at large, would have enjoyed, if the Surgeons Hoſpital had never been united with the Royal Infirmary.

" Had the Surgeons completed their plan of a diſtinct inſtitu-
" tion, we ſhould have ſeen a far different order of things: the
" building of a ſmall hoſpital would have been eaſily accom-
" pliſhed, and for ſo limited an inſtitution its reſources would
" have been great: the wards large and well aired; the patients
" comparatively few; their diet nouriſhing and generous; the
" houſe healthy, and free from infectious diſeaſe. This hoſpital,
" being the theatre of all the great operations in the city, would
" have been reputed a ſurgical ſchool inferior to none: The Sur-
" geons, ſenſible of the number of pupils gathering round them,
" would have begun to inſtruct them in the operations of ſurgery,
" and in thoſe parts of anatomy which relate to operations: and
" not in ſurgery and anatomy only, but in the diſeaſes which
" require operations, and in the infections, gangrenes, and fevers,
" which thoſe who have ſuffered operations are expoſed to.

" Thus Surgery would have been diſtinguiſhed from Medicine,
" and the Students would have felt the equal importance of
" both. Students, whatever their future deſtination, would have
" ſpent at leaſt one year in this important ſtudy: many who
" now leave the Univerſity quite ignorant of this profeſſion,
" would, by ſeeing the ſplendid ſtate of the Surgical Hoſpital, be
" induced to attend its operations and its teachers. Such a ſchool
" being attached to the Royal College of Surgeons, the profeſſion
" itſelf would have aſſumed a more important aſpect! Surgical
" operations and practice would have been improved! the mem-
" bers of this College would have applied with particular ardour
" both to their own profeſſion and to general ſcience. We think

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" we may, with all poſſible modeſty, put theſe down as the im-
" portant conſequences of ſuch an inſtitution ; and have little rea-
" ſon to doubt, that the Surgeons would have become enthuſiaſts
" in their profeſſion ; and ſurely they would have been faithful
" guardians of their own Hoſpital."

Such being the ineſtimable advantages which the Surgeons and their patients have loſt, and ſuch the dreadful evils which their patients have incurred, by their connection with this Hoſpital; what words can do juſtice to the unrelenting cruelty and atrocity of thoſe, who ſo eagerly ſought to eſtabliſh that connection, who have ſo long connived at all its fatal conſequences, and who ſtill wiſh it to continue in all its horrors? Let it be remembered that we are here conſidering the ſuppoſition, that Mr John Bell and his clients really believed what he has aſſerted, and they have ſanctioned. If ſo, their conduct is too plain a commentary on that memorable reſolution of their College already quoted, page 142. of this Memorial. They muſt indeed be *Shylocks*, or worſe than *Shylocks:* for the cruelty of *Shylock* was directed againſt one man only, and one who had offended and inſulted him ; but theirs muſt have brought miſery and death on many hundreds who had never injured or offended them ; who, in the hour of affliction and bittereſt anguiſh, had been intruſted to their charitable care, and for whom they pretended, and ſtill pretend, the greateſt benevolence, exalted and refined by a ſacred regard to religion.

That I may do no injuſtice to them by theſe remarks, or appear to ſuppreſs any thing that may tend to leſſen the indignation and horror which ſuch conduct as theirs cannot fail to inſpire, I muſt quote another paragraph, which, in Mr John Bell's pamphlet, immediately follows the one laſt quoted from it. His words are theſe: " But this object is loſt, and we will not tor-
" ture you with expreſſions of regret. Yet, ſhould Providence
" ſo order it, that this country, increaſing in population, riches,

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" and all good and charitable diſpoſitions, ſhould require a more " extenſive charity, we beſeech you, when that period arrives, as " moſt likely it will arrive, to revolve theſe conſiderations in your " mind." This ſentence, like another already quoted, page 363. line 10. of this Memorial, ſhows plainly that they ſaw what ought inſtantly to have been the direct *practical inference* from their own aſſertions; but yet, for reaſons which they beſt can explain, that practical inference is put off to a diſtant and indefinite period.

Let us then conſider, ſtill on the ſuppoſition that they believed or knew that all their aſſertions were true, what the *immediate* and *very frequent* conſequences muſt be of the continuance of that ſyſtem, which they acknowledge to be bad, but do not propoſe to remove, for many years at leaſt, perhaps for ſome generations.

As the hoſpital-gangrene, in conſequence of infections from the medical wards, rages like a plague among the Surgeons patients twice a-year; and as during the time that it rages, which cannot be leſs than two or three weeks, and may be two or three months, each return, no operations can be ſafely performed, becauſe it ſeizes *all* thoſe who have even the *ſmalleſt inciſions* practiſed upon them; as it infects all the ulcers, and changes the ſlighteſt ſores into gangrenes; the fate of every patient admitted into the ſurgeons wards at thoſe times, muſt indeed be deplorable. He has ſcarce a chance for recovery; and the greateſt probability of ſoon meeting a painful and lingering death. His ſituation muſt be greatly worſe than that of a ſheep going to the ſlaughter; which is the expreſſion that Mr John Bell, in treating of this ſubject in his Principles of Surgery, (page 211, 212.), has with great delicacy and judgment employed. The condition of the patient when firſt brought into the Hoſpital may be ſuch as to require the immediate performing of a capital operation, to give him his only chance

chance for his life. In ſuch caſes as fractured ſkull, ſtrangulated rupture, mortified limb, or even a bad compound fracture or ſevere gun-ſhot wound, the ſeveral operations required cannot be poſtponed, *even for a day*, without almoſt certain death to the patients. Suppoſing them all to have been judiciouſly directed, and ſkilfully performed, ſo that the patients, bating the danger of hoſpital-gangrene, would have had a good chance for recovery, this chance muſt be loſt in the certainty of the hoſpital-gangrene ſeizing them in a week, perhaps in leſs, with the greateſt probability of its being fatal in leſs than a fortnight. The caſe muſt be nearly the ſame with the more numerous claſs of patients admitted into thoſe wards on account of ſlight wounds and ulcers. Theſe muſt ſoon be affected with the hoſpital-gangrene, which muſt ſpread, and very often prove fatal. But dying would be the leaſt of the evils that ſuch patients would meet with; to them death would be a relief from the moſt cruel ſufferings. The hoſpital-gangrene is attended with excruciating burning pain; ſuch pain, that it has been a *relief* to ſome patients to have the whole ſurface of the ſore thoroughly ſeared with a red-hot iron. This was ſometimes practiſed with ſucceſs in the hoſpital at Lyons. In the progreſs of the diſeaſe, not only the ſkin is waſted, or rots away, to a vaſt extent, in a few days; but even the ſeveral portions of fleſh (muſcles) rot and ſeparate from one another, and at laſt drop off; ſo that in many caſes the bones of a limb have been left quite bare before the patient died. But in truth no words can convey an adequate notion of this dreadful diſeaſe: therefore, to ſupply that defect, and alſo to preclude any ſuſpicion of my having exaggerated the evil, I beg leave to refer the curious or diſtruſtful reader to the ample deſcription given of the hoſpital-gangrene, in the Principles of Surgery, by Mr John Bell himſelf, (page 108. to 119.), where he will find not only a very full general deſcription of the diſeaſe, but ſeveral particular caſes of it minutely deſcribed

ſcribed, and beſt of all, a coloured print, a portrait of the diſeaſe, and of a wretched creature dying of it; one *Joiner*, a boy belonging to the *Triumph*, and wounded on the memorable 11th of October 1797, and in his laſt ſad ſcene exhibiting ſome of the pride, pomp, and circumſtance of glorious war. It is plain from that print, that Mr John Bell underſtood and felt perfectly the force of Horace's maxim,

Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aures,
Quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus.

This maxim, and his print, on the preſent occaſion, ſerve my purpoſe as well as his. Let no perſons of weak nerves, nor any lady with child, look at that print: but let thoſe who have no ſuch reaſons to fear its ſtrong effect look ſteadily on it, and know, that if what Mr John Bell has ſo confidently aſſerted, and his clients have ſo ſtrongly and openly ſanctioned, be true, ſuch is *one* of the evils which their predeceſſors brought on thoſe patients for whom they profeſſed ſuch pious and tender care; which every Surgeon, from Deacon Kennedy and his friends to Mr John Bell and his friends or clients, who in the courſe of ſixty years has attended and operated in this Hoſpital, has quietly connived at; and which theſe gentlemen moſt piouſly and humanely propoſe to allow to continue, till " Providence ſhall ſo order it, that this country, " increaſing in population, riches, and all good and charitable diſ- " poſitions, ſhall require a more extenſive charity."—Or do they wiſh it to be conſidered as one of thoſe little inconveniences to which they alluded in that eloquent and pathetic ſentence, wherein they tell us, that " even humanity herſelf muſt diſpenſe with ſome " of thoſe comforts which ſhe would wiſh to heap upon the un- " fortunate objects of her care?" If ſo, then *Timeo Danaos et dona*

ferentes, in whatever language it may be expreſſed, muſt ever be the heartfelt ſentiment of all thoſe truly unfortunate objects.

I formerly hinted (page 102.) my ſuſpicion, that the Spirit of Deacon Kennedy ſtill reſted on ſome of his ſucceſſors; having deſcended to them along with his cloak. The cloak is eaſily known; notwithſtanding the profuſion of lace and embroidery with which Mr John Bell has adorned it, and the large border of zeal for ſcience with which he has tried to eke it out. Every body muſt recogniſe it at once as the good old thread-bare covering, which has been ſlave to thouſands, and has covered, and will cover men of every ſhape and every ſize; all but the cloven foot, which never can be long concealed, and from which a ſhrewd gueſs may be made of the nature and intents of that Spirit; be they wicked or charitable; bring it airs from Heaven, or blaſts from Hell. We are all, I I preſume, pretty well accuſtomed to get a glimpſe of the ſaid cloven foot, on certain occaſions; and generally expect to ſee it peeping out under the hem of that cloak which Mr John Bell wears with ſuch becoming grace; but probably, till his pamphlet appeared, none of us ever had the cloven foot ſo boldly daſhed in our faces, or ever had ſo complete a view of it in its full ſize and proportion. *Ex pede Herculem* and *Ex ungue leonem*, are well-known and juſt maxims. From ſo goodly a cloven foot what vaſt ideas muſt we have of the perſon to whom it belongs? if indeed it belong to him, and not he to it. But I doubt much whether he be not rather a part of the cloven foot, than the cloven foot a part of him: for if it were taken away, it is difficult to conceive what, or how much, or whether any thing of Mr John Bell would remain. But this curious problem in Demonology will perhaps be ſolved by an attentive conſideration of the next and only other article of his pamphlet on which I intend to offer any remarks.

In

In the mean time I muſt point out, that all theſe very unfavourable inferences with reſpect to him and his clients are juſt, and neceſſarily true, only on the ſuppoſition, that they had all *believed* what he aſſerted, and they ſanctioned, with reſpect to the origin of the hoſpital-gangrene, and the prevalence of it in the ſurgeons wards of this hoſpital. But it is conceiveable that neither he nor they believed what he aſſerted and they ſanctioned: and they are unqueſtionably entitled, in ſtrict and candid reaſoning, to take their choice of either ſide of the dilemma, which they have ſo logically and judiciouſly contrived for themſelves. But one or other of the ſuppoſitions they *muſt* take: there *can be no third* ſuppoſition with reſpect to their conduct. It is impoſſible to get out of ſuch a dilemma: which briefly ſtands thus.

Either they believed, or they did not believe, what he aſſerted and they ſanctioned. If they did not believe it, they muſt all be infamous for deliberately and ſeriouſly aſſerting a malevolent falſehood. If they did believe it, they muſt be ſtill more infamous, and moreover ought all to be hanged, for knowingly and deliberately allowing ſo many of their patients, year after year, to die a lingering and painful death, by breathing air which they knew to be poiſonous. Their guilt, and the atrocity of their conduct, would be juſt the ſame as if they had knowingly allowed an equal number of their patients to die by eating poiſoned bread, or drinking poiſoned water. There are no laws to puniſh a crime which no lawgiver could foreſee, or think poſſible: therefore they will eſcape hanging: but they cannot eſcape curſes both loud and deep, if they perſiſt in that aſſertion, which neceſſarily implies ſuch unrelenting and atrocious cruelty in their own paſt and preſent conduct.

I come now to the laſt, but not the leaſt important article, of Mr John Bell's Anſwer to my Memorial, on which I think it neceſſary to make any remarks: I mean the wonderful and very eloquent account, that he has been pleaſed to give, of the Clinical Lectures, and of the atrocious wanton cruelty with which they are conducted. This part of his pamphlet is by far the moſt ſplendid ſample of his genius that I have ever ſeen; and much more than enough to make his name immortal, if he had never written another page. It is of ſuch conſequence in diſcuſſing this point, to preclude even the poſſibility of any ſuſpicion that I miſrepreſent or ſuppreſs any part of his diſcourſe, that, tedious as it may appear to ſome perſons, I muſt tranſcribe full ſix pages of his pamphlet; between the 42d and the 49th page of the 2d ſection of it. Let it be obſerved, that this is the ſection of his pamphlet which ſeems, in a peculiar manner, to have obtained, as it certainly merited, the higheſt approbation and gratitude of his friends and clients; for to it their vote of thanks is particularly directed. (See Preface to this Memorial.) It muſt therefore be underſtood by every perſon who reads his pamphlet and their vote of thanks, that every thing atrocious, marvellous, and almoſt incredible, which he has aſſerted with reſpect to the Clinical Lectures, is fully adopted and ſanctioned by them; and that they, individually and collectively, vouch for the truth of every thing that he has aſſerted, as what they believed or knew to be true. Let it be obſerved alſo, that the account which he has given of the Clinical Lectures, or rather of the conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors in their practice in the Hoſpital, is ſtated evidently by way of contraſt to the very different conduct of the Surgeons in their department, and plainly with a view to repreſent their practice, and their conduct towards their patients as kindneſs and humanity, compared to what the patients experience who fall under the care of the Clinical Profeſſors.

" *Of*

" *Of the* ESSENTIAL *and* CONSTITUTIONAL CONNECTION *of the* MEDICAL SCHOOL *of* EDINBURGH *with the* ROYAL INFIRMARY.

You may eaſily imagine, Gentlemen, how invaluable a benefit it is to our profeſſion, to have a practical ſchool, ſince the Univerſity itſelf was imperfect, until it had attained a connection with this Hoſpital. It is neceſſary that young phyſicians be made familiar with the ſymptoms of fever, the appearances of eruptions, the varieties of the pulſe, the affections of reſpiration, the changes of the eye, complexion, and countenance, and all the viſible characters of inward diſeaſe: and it becomes the duty of the medical profeſſor to teach practically, not only the genuine practice, but the various theories of medicine. For the performing of theſe duties, Clinical Wards are appointed: this is the department of your Hoſpital which we now proceed to explain; and we hope, that no expreſſion of ours will be interpreted as diſreſpectful to that department of teaching and practice, which we conſider as peculiarly honourable to thoſe who fulfil the duty, as the moſt uſeful part of that courſe of education, which has made this ſchool of medicine eſteemed above any in Europe. (1) (2) (3)

The period was moſt honourable to the patrons and managers of this charity, and ever to be remembered, when, indifferent to vulgar prejudice, and undiſmayed by popular clamour, they permitted this very important department of public teaching to be aſſimilated with their Hoſpital. The univerſity had no proper hoſpital, no accumulated funds, no patronage to beſtow; they had every thing to aſk of your liberality, and nothing to give in return, but that benefit which would accrue to humanity and ſcience from this new mode of inſtruction. Regardleſs of every thing, (4) (5)

but

but the general intereſts of ſcience, you received within your walls
(6) a department which could bring along with it nothing but public odium; with moſt commendable liberality, you eſtabliſhed the Clinical Profeſſors in privileges fully equal to thoſe claimed by the
(7) Royal College of Surgeons: you allotted them alſo wards, ſuperior in every reſpect to thoſe of the ſurgeons.

(8) As for experiments in ſurgery, we know of none; it is a department of practice too plain and ſimple not to have ſettled principles: the rules of our ſcience aſcertain, with tolerable preciſion, where an operation is neceſſary. When a white ſwelling is plainly incurable, it is no experiment to cut off the limb, and there is but one
(9) way in which the operation can be performed! but it is an expe-
(10) riment, and a bold one too, when arſenic is given to cure that ſlight intermitting fever which bark and wine will poſitively cure.

It is unqueſtionably true, that the teaching and demonſtrating by experiment the beſt and moſt approved practice, muſt be, upon the whole, advantageous to the ſick; yet the making profeſſed trial of every practice is not ſo! it is only on the preſumption of
(11) general good, that, in this inſtance, experiments, which muſt be a partial evil, are allowed. We unequivocally approve, in the
(12) practice of the medical profeſſion, a latitude which we dare not admit in our own: we unequivocally declare, that we think a clinical ward the moſt uſeful part of a medical inſtitute; yet there are many, above the rank of the vulgar, who will be always doubtful whether your delegated powers, as managers of a public
(13) charity, extend thus omnipotently over the lives of your fellow-creatures.

The univerſity could never, by any public nor private exertion, by its influence, its riches, or the report of its good intentions, and the benefit intended to ſcience, have erected this moſt neceſſary
(14) part of the medical ſchool. A diſtinct Clinical Hoſpital is a thing quite

quite unknown; ſuch an undertaking never was attempted: though a laudable inſtitution, a Clinical Hoſpital muſt be ſhrouded (15) from the public eye. A Clinical Hoſpital, erected with the avowed deſign of receiving deſperate and forlorn caſes! of practiſing ex- (16) periments! of teaching the profeſſion to young phyſicians! of proving the hypotheſes of medicine! and trying, by experience, (17) the efficacy of drugs, will never paſs upon the world for a mere charity. Such an inſtitution would be looked upon with jealouſy by the rich, and by the poor with horror. Thoſe who entered, by ſad neceſſity, into ſuch a hoſpital, would believe themſelves every way loſt; and thoſe who died, would be thought to have ſuffered. Gentlemen, it is to your liberal conſtructions of the deſign of ſuch an inſtitution, and to your regard for ſcience and the general intereſts of humanity, that we owe the benefits of the Clinical Wards and Lectures. Your motives for allowing this dangerous innova- (18) tion were pure and open. No buſy ſearcher into the records of your Infirmary can prove, on this occaſion, a pactum illicitum! a preſent of money! an actual reward for the perverſion of the judgment! a logical, or a real bribe! No, the univerſity had nothing to give, and every thing to gain.

So it happened, however, that Clinical Wards were appointed, and lectures on the caſes of the patients were given in your Hoſpital; a thing unknown in London, or in other ſchools! and books (19) of experiments, under the undiſguiſed name of CLINICAL EXPERIMENTS, were publiſhed by the Profeſſors of the univerſity, (20) and trials of new medicines, and new methods of cure, made on the good people of this city: for what end? not for the inſtruction of our own native ſurgeons, but for the inſtruction of young men, convened by the celebrity of the ſchool, from all parts of the world.

What then is the nature of this new department, ingrafted thus upon the original conſtitution of this Hoſpital? What unbought privileges have the profeſſors of the univerſity acquired?—They,

without

without any exertion to erect a ſchool, have found one in your wards! and without the invidious name of Clinical Hoſpital, they
(21) have a ſafe place where they can make experiments, as dangerous, as long continued, as expenſive as they pleaſe! without a new inſti-
(22) tution to ſupport, they receive the fees of the numerous pupils, and without adding to the funds of the houſe, (ſince thoſe pupils pay to the infirmary no more than the ordinary fees), they have
(23) poſſeſſion of wards, larger and better appointed than thoſe allotted to our ſurgical department: Without their purpoſe being obſerved,
(24) they can go into the waiting-room, and mark out the moſt dangerous diſeaſes as the ſubjects for their practice. Sometimes when patients, having uncommon diſeaſes, are received by the ordinary
(25) phyſicians, they are reclaimed by the Clinical Profeſſors, the rightful lords of the manor! At one time fevers, at another palſies, at
(26) another time hydropſies or convulſions, are in requeſt! The Hoſpital itſelf, and all its patients, are at the command of the Clinical Profeſſors! they walk in among theſe patients! look at them!
(27) hang their noſological labels and tallies round their necks! and ſend them to their own wards, there to prick off the lines of the prevail-
(28) ing doctrines upon their bodies.

Let us now apply to this department of the practical ſchool, the obſervations and criticiſms of your enterpriſing Memorialiſt. "The ſurgeons," ſays he, "ſucceed each other in rapid ſucceſſion every two months." It is true, but where the ſurgeon is changed, his aſſiſtant uſually ſucceeds him! Each ſurgeon begins to attend the Infirmary a month before his term of duty arrives, and he does not ceaſe to attend till thoſe upon whom he has performed any great operation are well. Though the ſurgeon is changed every two months, the patients are permanent; the practice is ſteady, rational, and conſiſtent; numbers of ſurgeons are in conſtant attendance in the conſultation room, to aſſiſt the attending ſurgeon with their advice; he often appeals to them, and there

ſeldom

ſeldom paſſes a day in which he does not bring patients with various complaints into the conſulting room; either to conſult about their caſes when they are received, to remark, to his fellow-ſurgeons, any remarkable changes in their diſeaſes, or to ſhow their condition before they are diſcharged.

But in the Clinical Ward, the phyſician in attendance is always alone and unaſſiſted; his office is indeed of ſuch a nature as will (29) not allow of advice or aſſiſtance. Each winter two phyſicians take charge of theſe wards, and each attends but a little more than two months. The firſt phyſician comes out in November, fills his wards, aſſorts his diſeaſes, writes notes and regular reports of his patients' complaints; completes his experiments, lectures on their caſes, and then empties theſe wards, by delivering his patients over to the ordinary phyſicians, or by actually diſmiſſing them from the houſe. Is it not happy for theſe poor people, that they have not the ſenſibilities and delicacies of people bred in the higher ranks of life? This is a kind of teaching, in which the demonſtrator chalks his lines and diagrams on the board, till, having demonſtrated too much at once, his lines become perplexed! (30) but he takes his ſpunge, and wipes all clear for ſome new demonſtration.

Theſe being profeſſed experiments, it is not uſual for the ſecond profeſſor to complete the experiments, or purſue the practice of the firſt. The wards which are opened in November are emptied in January, in February they are filled again! Then come new patients, new caſes, new experiments, new doctrines, and a new Profeſſor! all theſe things are changed, and "the WHALE" finds itſelf ſporting in a freſh element, with NEW TUBS of all forms and dimenſions, floating around it.

But if experience be required, in what ſtation ſhould it be more deſirable, than in conducting a clinical ward; where good ſenſe, prudence, diſcretion, and profeſſional knowledge are all needful? It

is the part of the Hoſpital to which the moſt hopeleſs and deſperate
(31) caſes are conveyed; the ſtage of perpetual experiments; the ſcene upon which the public eye is fixed; the department of your inſtitution, where popular prejudices are moſt to be feared. It is the ſchool, too, where the phyſician not only practiſes on his fellow-creatures, but inſtructs, at once, hundreds of young men, and extends the errors or benefits of his own practice to diſtant
(32) times and countries.

Where, in all the circle of medical teaching, in ſchools, colleges,
(33) or hoſpitals, is there a more important charge? Let the Memorialiſt remember by which of the profeſſors theſe duties are fulfilled! and learn to ſpeak diſcreetly of us, though we are young men!"

Before I offer any remarks on the particular paſſages of this admirable philippic, which paſſages I have pointed out by marginal numbers, I think it neceſſary to premiſe a few obſervations on the general tenor of it, and that kind of miſrepreſentation which pervades it from end to end.

In the firſt place, then, it muſt be obvious to every perſon, that he has uniformly employed the term *clinical* as ſynonymous with *empirical* or *experimental*. He has not indeed defined or explained it, but he has uniformly employed it in this ſenſe; ſo uniformly, that no perſon who did not previouſly know the meaning of the word, or who had never even ſeen it or heard it but in the paſſage quoted from Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, could ever ſuſpect that it had any other meaning: but in truth that is not the meaning of the word *clinical*, nor, to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, was it ever uſed in that ſenſe by any perſon but Mr John Bell himſelf.

If this miſtake or perverſion of the meaning of a common medical word proceeded from ignorance in Mr John Bell, and if the ſanctioning of it by their vote of thanks proceeded from correſponding

ponding ignorance in his clients, it would be indeed a deplorable example of medical men uſing one of their commoneſt profeſſional words without underſtanding it; but it would not imply any diſingenuity or wilful miſrepreſention on their part. It would be juſt like the common blunder of the patients and the nurſes in the clinical wards, who, ignorant not only of the meaning but of the ſpelling of the word, often call them the *trinical*, and ſometimes the *trinity* wards. But as ſuch ignorance could not account for their uniformly uſing the word clinical in a ſenſe totally different from its own, and one groſsly unfavourable to the Clinical Profeſſors, and to the Managers of the Infirmary, I can hardly believe that the conduct of Mr John Bell and his clients in this reſpect proceeded from honeſt ignorance: but if they wiſh to avail themſelves of ſuch a miſerable excuſe, they are heartily welcome; my opinion is to be underſtood as expreſſed with a *ſalvo jure* to them.

The word Clinical, by its derivation and original meaning, as well as by the uniform uſe and application of it in the converſation and writings of Phyſicians, has always been underſtood to mean that kind of medical practice and inſtruction which relates to patients labouring under ſuch acute or other dangerous diſeaſes as to be almoſt or wholly confined to bed. It is derived from the Greek word *cline*, which ſignifies a bed, and the word *clinical*, as uſed in this medical ſchool, the firſt in theſe kingdoms in which Clinical Lectures were given, relates properly to certain medical lectures; but by a natural and almoſt inevitable latitude of ſpeech, is extended to the patients whoſe caſes are the ſubjects of thoſe lectures, to thoſe wards of the Hoſpital in which theſe patients are entertained, and even to the Profeſſors who read thoſe lectures. Clinical Lectures are practical medical lectures, which differ from the general ſyſtematic lectures on the practice of phyſic, in this reſpect, that while in the latter the Profeſſor treats of the ſeveral diſeaſes to

which the human body is ſubject, conſidered in a general view, without any reference to the peculiarities that may take place in individual patients; in the former, the Clinical Lectures, the Profeſſor endeavours to point out to his pupils the peculiarities in the caſe of every individual patient with reſpect to the cauſes, the ſymptoms, the progreſs, the probable event, and the actual termination of the diſeaſe; the reaſons for employing a particular plan of cure, for chooſing certain remedies, for varying the adminiſtration of theſe, or in ſome caſes for changing them altogether and employing other remedies: and he endeavours to point out and to diſtinguiſh thoſe ſymptoms, whether uſual or accidental, that proceed from the diſeaſe, and thoſe, favourable or unfavourable, common or uncommon, which proceed from the remedies employed.

In ſhort, the Clinical Lectures are juſt a commentary on the practice which the Profeſſor employs on the patients under his care: and according to the moſt ſtrict and literal meaning of clinical lectures, they ought to be delivered actually at the bed-ſide of the patients. To a certain degree this is really done, in the form of thoſe full reports, as they are called, or deſcriptions of the ſtate of the patient, the progreſs or change of ſymptoms, and the effects of remedies; which reports are generally made more full and particular by the Clinical Profeſſors than it is neceſſary, or even poſſible, for the ordinary Phyſicians of the Hoſpital to make them with reſpect to their patients, who are ſo much more numerous. Nay, occaſionally, in the clinical wards, remarks are made by the Profeſſors, and the attention of the ſtudents is particularly called to many little circumſtances as they occur, which cannot be explained by any deſcription, or learned in any other way but by actual obſervation. But the impropriety of carrying very far this kind of clinical inſtruction muſt be obvious. Even the indelicacy, or in many caſes the cruelty, of ſpeaking freely of the nature and

danger

danger of the diſeaſes in the hearing of the patients themſelves, muſt preclude all thoughts of delivering full clinical lectures at their bed-ſides. The time unavoidably required for ſuch lectures would make them very diſtreſſing to the patients, as well as highly inconvenient to the Profeſſor and the ſtudents: and it may fairly be preſumed, that the lectures will be in every reſpect at leaſt as good, and in many reſpects much better, when the Profeſſor is allowed ſome time to prepare them, by collecting and arranging his thoughts, by conſulting different authors whoſe obſervations and reaſonings tend to illuſtrate the ſubjects of the lectures; nay, even by comparing or contraſting together the caſes of ſeveral patients labouring under the ſame or ſimilar diſeaſes, which often tend greatly to explain and illuſtrate one another.

Such explanations and commentaries, on the part of a phyſician who practiſes in an hoſpital, muſt always be uſeful to the ſtudents who were obſerving and learning his practice, and to many of them muſt be abſolutely neceſſary. A ſtudent of good talents, who has already made conſiderable progreſs in the ſtudy of phyſic, and who has even ſeen a good deal of practice, either in hoſpitals or in private, may very probably underſtand, without the help of any explanation or commentary, all that the Profeſſor can tell him in his lectures: but this cannot be the caſe with all the ſtudents, nor indeed with any of them at firſt. A ſtudent juſt beginning to ſee actual practice may not know what the diſeaſe is which he ſees, even though a ſimple one; or if he knows what the diſeaſe is called, he may have very erroneous, imperfect, or confuſed notions of the nature, the cauſes, the progreſs, and the probable terminations of it: he muſt be ſtill more at a loſs when any uncommon accidental ſymptoms occur in ſuch a diſeaſe; and moſt of all, when two or more diſeaſes, as often happens, are combined at once in the ſame perſon: he may be much at a loſs to know the import of many ſymptoms, as favourable or unfavourable, and even to diſtinguiſh

between

between the ſymptoms of the diſeaſe and the effects of the remedies employed: he may ſcarce underſtand the general purpoſe or plan of cure which the Phyſician adopts, and very generally can have no notion of the reaſons for which a Phyſician employs certain remedies, in preference to others of the ſame kind; of his reaſon for giving thoſe medicines in a certain manner, as to form, and doſe, and repetition, and for changing occaſionally, not only the mode of adminiſtering the remedies, but the remedies altogether, and for trying others perhaps of a very different kind. Theſe are the purpoſes of clinical lectures; and for theſe and no other purpoſes did the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, more than fifty years ago, give permiſſion to the Profeſſors of Phyſic to read clinical lectures on the caſes of ſome of the patients admitted into this Hoſpital.

Nothing more than that kind of practice moſt innocent with reſpect to the patients, and that kind of inſtruction moſt uſeful with reſpect to the ſtudents, ever was intended by the Managers, in permitting the inſtitution of Clinical Lectures, or underſtood or accepted by the Profeſſors in diſcharging the duties of that important office. It would be abſurd to ſet about proving that ſuch clinical lectures cannot be injurious or dangerous; but it is worth while to point out, as this may not be obvious to every perſon, that they cannot fail, every thing elſe being equal, to prove highly beneficial to the patients. It muſt not be conſidered as a reflection injurious to the ordinary phyſicians of this or of any other hoſpital; for I have no ſuch thought, when I ſay that it would be for the benefit of all patients, in hoſpitals and not in hoſpitals, if their phyſicians were obliged to read Clinical Lectures on their caſes. I do not know, nor can I conceive, any human contrivance, that can more effectually and irreſiſtibly oblige the phyſician to ſtudy carefully the caſe of his patient; to attend to every ſymptom or change of ſymptom in it; to exert himſelf to the utmoſt for his

patient's

patient's relief, and at the ſame time to be as cautious as poſſible in the remedies that he employs; than to find himſelf under the *neceſſity* of giving a minute account of every thing that he has done, in a very public manner, and before a number of competent judges. I do not mean to ſay that ſuch a ſyſtem ever can be eſtabliſhed, or that in general it is neceſſary on account of the ignorance, lazineſs, indifference, negligence, or raſhneſs of phyſicians: but I ſay with confidence, that if ſuch a ſyſtem were eſtabliſhed no patient could ſuffer by it, and many would profit greatly. Such little deficiencies as I have mentioned, though not common, are not quite unknown in phyſicians, whoſe patients muſt ſometimes have ſuffered ſeverely by them; which they would not have done, if their phyſicians had been *compelled* to that ſtrict attention, and perſevering exertion, which are abſolutely indiſpenſable in Clinical Profeſſors. Theſe profeſſors can have no more pretenſions to infallibility than other phyſicians: like other phyſicians, but I preſume not more, they muſt ſometimes err in their judgment, and be unſucceſsful in their practice: but I am ſure they cannot incur the ſuſpicion of lazineſs, negligence, or raſhneſs. Their own fame and fortune are ſo completely and immediately at ſtake, that if they were by nature unfeeling and raſh, and by habit lazy and negligent, they would find themſelves, by their ſituation, rouſed to thoſe exertions and cautions, which a ſenſe of duty and every humane and honourable conſideration require of every phyſician.

What I have here ſtated as the neceſſary conſequence of the inſtitution of Clinical Lectures, or ſome other correſponding ſyſtem, which may be ſuppoſed, though it cannot be put in practice, with reſpect to all phyſicians, is in a great meaſure verified with reſpect to the practice of the ordinary Phyſicians in this Hoſpital; whoſe daily viſits, whoſe regular reports of the caſes of the patients in the preſence of a number of ſtudents, many of whom are well qualified to judge of all that they ſee and hear, are almoſt

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equivalent to the obligation of reading Clinical Lectures. Of the great and good effect of this part of our Hoſpital ſyſtem thoſe can beſt judge who have ſeen how differently the practice of the phyſicians is conducted in ſome other hoſpitals, in which the phyſicians do not ſee their patients every day, perhaps only once a-week; in which they give no reports of the hiſtory and progreſs of their diſeaſes; and in which they do not act under the inſpection of ſo many, ſo well informed, and ſuch formidable judges of their conduct.

Correſponding to that account which Mr John Bell has given of *Clinical* Lectures and inſtruction, and evidently intended to make a part of it, is the notion that he ſtrongly inſinuates, of the nature of thoſe *experiments* of which he wiſhes to repreſent the patients under the care of the Clinical Profeſſors as the miſerable victims.* This part of his diſcourſe is made the more horrible by being cautiouſly expreſſed in obſcure general terms, which ſtrongly convey the meaning of ſomething dreadfully bad: too bad perhaps to be mentioned particularly; and therefore to be left in a great meaſure to the imagination of the tender-hearted reader. But that no reader's imagination might take a *wrong* direction, and indulge a pleaſing dream that thoſe *experiments* of the Clinical Profeſſors were only the faithful and public diſcharge of that well-known and indiſpenſable duty which every phyſician owes to all his patients, both in hoſpitals and in private; of that duty which every perſon of ſenſe *expects*, and which many perſons, when themſelves, or their families, or their friends are ſick, *demand* of their phyſicians, often too haſtily and importunately; namely, that they ſhould firſt employ thoſe remedies, that is, *try* thoſe *experiments*, which they think ſafeſt and moſt likely to be ſucceſsful, but, failing theſe, ſhould *try* other remedies, even though leſs promiſing, and more rough, and more dangerous; in ſhort, that they ſhould leave nothing *untried* that may give their patients their beſt or only

chance

chance for recovery or relief;—Mr John Bell has moſt judiciouſly and kindly aſſiſted and directed the wandering imaginations of his gentle readers, by ſuch hints as theſe: "that it becomes the duty of the medical Profeſſors to teach practically, not only the genuine practice, but the *various theories* of medicine: that for the performing of theſe duties clinical wards are appointed: that the Managers, *indifferent to vulgar prejudice*, and *undiſmayed by popular clamour*, and *regardleſs of every thing but the general intereſts of ſcience*, permitted this very important department to be aſſimilated with their Hoſpital: that though the teaching and demonſtrating by experiment the beſt and moſt approved practice muſt be upon the whole advantageous to the ſick, yet the making profeſſed *trial of every* practice *is not ſo:* that a diſtinct clinical hoſpital is a thing quite unknown; ſuch an undertaking never was attempted; though a laudable inſtitution, a clinical hoſpital muſt be *ſhrouded from the public eye:* A clinical hoſpital, erected with the avowed deſign of receiving deſperate and forlorn caſes, of *practiſing experiments*, of teaching the profeſſion to young phyſicians, of proving the *hypotheſes* of medicine, and trying *by experience the efficacy of drugs*, will never paſs upon the world for a mere charity; ſuch an inſtitution would be looked upon with *jealouſy* by the rich, and by the poor with *horror;* thoſe who enter by ſad neceſſity into ſuch an hoſpital, would believe themſelves *every way loſt*, and thoſe who died would be thought to have *ſuffered.* They (the Profeſſors) have a ſafe place where they can *make experiments*, as *dangerous*, as long continued, as expenſive as they pleaſe: As for experiments in ſurgery, we know of none. It is a department of practice too plain and ſimple not to have ſettled principles: but it is an *experiment*, and *a bold one* too, when *arſenic* is given to cure that ſlight intermittent fever which bark and wine will poſitively cure," &c. This is the only particular inſtance which he has thought fit to give, of that kind of practice, and thoſe experi-

ments, which he repreſents as the peculiar purpoſe of the clinical wards, and the proper duty of the Clinical Profeſſors.

From theſe few ſpecimens that I have quoted, and ſtill better from the whole tenor of his diſcourſe, quoted verbatim, page 373. to 378. of this Memorial, every reader may judge for himſelf what notion of the buſineſs of the clinical wards, and of the conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors, and indeed of the Managers of the Infirmary, Mr John Bell wiſhed to give the public; but let it be remembered always, that the horrible inſtitution, which he deſcribes in ſuch ſtrong terms, is, at the ſame time, made the ſubject of his higheſt and almoſt extravagant encomiums. For what purpoſe theſe encomiums are laviſhed on it, he beſt can explain; but it is at leaſt abundantly evident, that he wiſhes to repreſent the Managers as having given, and the Clinical Profeſſors as having accepted and actually employed in their practice, a latitude with reſpect to their profeſſional conduct, which phyſicians are not allowed in their ordinary practice, either in private or in hoſpitals; and which in this Hoſpital at leaſt the Managers did not allow to the ordinary phyſicians. Nay, Mr John Bell has had the ſingular goodneſs and liberality to declare, that he and his brethren unequivocally approve in the practice of the medical profeſſion, a *latitude* which they dare not admit in their own.

With reſpect to clinical wards, and clinical lectures, at leaſt in the Royal Infirmary, and the Univerſity of Edinburgh, I may without vanity ſuppoſe that I know as much as moſt men living. For more than thirty years I have been well acquainted with thoſe wards, and in the laſt ſix-and-twenty years I have myſelf conducted twenty courſes of clinical lectures, of three months each; implying my having treated in the clinical wards about two thouſand patients: and I declare, ſolemnly and unequivocally, that I never underſtood, that the Clinical Profeſſors had any ſuch peculiar latitude in their conduct, or any peculiar power or privi-

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lege of trying experiments on their patients, or of teaching practically the various theories of medicine. I never underſtood, or heard, nor can I even now, after peruſing Mr John Bell's high encomium on the Managers for their very liberal conduct, believe that the ſaid Managers *could* give ſuch a permiſſion or ſuch latitude to the Clinical Profeſſors. They certainly could neither abſolve themſelves from their own ſolemn oath, to diſcharge faithfully their duty as Managers of the Hoſpital, nor abſolve the Clinical Profeſſors from the oath which they had taken when firſt permitted to act as phyſicians. They could not even give theſe Profeſſors, ſuppoſing them to have taken no ſuch oath, a diſpenſation from the well-known duties of their profeſſion. Theſe duties, and the oath by which they are uſually enforced, make no diſtinction between rich patients and poor; between thoſe in private houſes and thoſe in a great hoſpital; between thoſe in the common wards and thoſe in the clinical wards of this Infirmary. I do not believe that any Manager of the Infirmary ever thought of giving, or any Profeſſor of accepting, ſuch a horrible diſpenſation; any more than they would have thought of giving or accepting a diſpenſation from the Ten Commandments, from the laws of their country, from allegiance to their Sovereign, and from every moral duty. But ſuppoſing, for the ſake of argument, that at the time when the clinical lectures were firſt eſtabliſhed, ſuch a diſpenſation, or permiſſion, was given by the Managers, and that it has been continued by all their ſucceſſors in that important truſt for fifty years; and that it was accepted by all the Clinical Profeſſors, and that all of them have availed themſelves of it in their practice: then I ſay with confidence, that, far from deſerving thoſe high encomiums which Mr John Bell has beſtowed upon them, and which his clients have ſo ſtrongly ſanctioned, every ſuch Manager and Profeſſor, and every perſon who approves of ſuch conduct, *ought to be hanged.* Nay, I will go one ſtep farther, and give it as my

opinion, that every perſon who entertains any doubts on that point, alſo deſerves to be hanged: for Mr John Bell has been pleaſed to ſay, after praiſing in the higheſt terms the conduct of the Managers, " Yet there are many above the rank of the vulgar, " who will be always doubtful, whether your delegated powers as " Managers of a public charity, extend thus omnipotently over " the lives of your fellow-creatures."

As the moſt complete proof that I can give of what I have always underſtood to be the purpoſe of Clinical Lectures, and the duty of the Clinical Profeſſors in their hoſpital-practice, I ſhall give here the exact words of that part of my introductory Clinical Lecture which relates to my general plan of practice in the Infirmary, and the trying of experiments on the patients. That lecture, and eſpecially this paſſage of it, though never printed, I conſider as having long been publiſhed; for I am ſure it will be recogniſed by many hundreds of my pupils, ſome of whom I hope will take the trouble to compare it with their own manuſcript copies of it. A great part of that lecture was occaſionally varied; but this paſſage was never omitted, when I began the clinical courſe; becauſe I thought it of peculiar importance, for moral as well as phyſical reaſons.

" With reſpect to my general plan of practice in the clinical wards, the rule which I have laid down to myſelf ever ſince I entered on the exerciſe of my profeſſion, to which I mean always to adhere, and which I ſhould moſt earneſtly recommend to you all, at leaſt till you have learned by ſome years experience *quid ferre recuſent, quid valeant humeri*, is to begin with the ſimpleſt, ſafeſt, and moſt approved method of cure; even though it be the commoneſt.

" Such is the method, that duty to his patients, or a regard to their ſafety, as well as prudence, or a regard to his own intereſt and character,

character, will oblige every practitioner, and more eſpecially every young practitioner, to employ.

" If it ſucceeds, you cannot have a better or a more uſeful leſſon. If it fails, then is the time for varying our practice, and trying new experiments; for then it is not only allowable, but incumbent on every Phyſician, however limited his knowledge and ſmall his experience may be, to alter his method, which he finds is not likely to ſucceed, and to try another, and another, in hopes of better ſucceſs. But even theſe trials are not to be made indiſcriminately, or raſhly, or at random.

" The Phyſician ſhould have at leaſt ſome probable, though he can never have any certain grounds, on which to proceed: in other words, he ſhould have ſome reaſons for the trials that he makes, and for the preference that he gives to certain remedies. If he has already had any experience of their good effects in ſimilar diſorders, even though ſucceſs has not always attended their uſe, he need not heſitate about giving them. If he is informed from authority that he thinks reſpectable, for he muſt not give too much credit to the information of the vulgar, the ignorant, and the intereſted, that a remedy has been found highly ſerviceable in a particular diſeaſe, he is entitled, and I think it is his duty, to give it a trial. Even without any experience or information to guide him, if, from his knowledge of the nature of the diſeaſe, and his opinion of the powers of any untried remedy, of which he may form at leaſt a probable conjecture from its ſenſible qualities, its chemical properties, and its reſemblance or affinity to medicines of known efficacy, that it is likely to be of ſervice in ſuch a diſeaſe, and at the ſame time is convinced that it may be adminiſtered with ſafety to the patient, he ought unqueſtionably to give it a trial. Such is the *right*, and the *duty*, of every rational Phyſician; and ſuch is the method by which, with caution and attention, and accurate obſervation, joined to profeſſional knowledge and natural acuteneſs,

acuteneſs, he may expect, at the ſame time, to improve the practice of his art, and to extend the limits of his ſcience.

" With reſpect to all experiments to be tried on patients, give me leave to recommend to you the ſhort and comprehenſive precept, which my Father uſed to give to all his pupils, " Never to try " an experiment on any of them which you would not wiſh to " have tried on yourſelves, or on thoſe who were deareſt to " you, if you or they were in the ſame ſituation with your pa- " tients."

" I have inſiſted the more ſtrongly on this point, of the experiments that may with propriety be made on patients, becauſe I know that many Students entertain a very erroneous notion of the nature and purpoſe of Clinical practice, and Clinical inſtruction; and imagine the Phyſician and Profeſſor is left at liberty, if not abſolutely obliged, to try whatever experiments he may think fit with a view to the improvement of his ſcience, and the inſtruction or amuſement of his pupils. But you muſt conſider that the recovery of our patients is the principal, and your inſtruction only a ſecondary object, in a courſe of Clinical Lectures. I ſhall always think I give you the beſt inſtruction in my power, when I ſhow you the ſimpleſt, ſafeſt, and moſt effectual practice, with which I am acquainted.

" It often happens, that gentlemen attending my lectures think of remedies, even ſuch as are well known, which did not occur to me; and ſometimes are acquainted with remedies, and have been witneſſes of their good effects, of which remedies I had never heard, or at leaſt had never had any experience. I ſhall gladly receive, and ſhall think myſelf obliged to you for, any information of that kind, which any of you may give me. In conſequence of ſuch an offer, on former occaſions, I have frequently received aſſiſtance from my pupils, and have employed ſome of the remedies that they recommended to me with great ſucceſs. Obſerve, however,

I do not engage to try every remedy that may be propoſed to me in this way; but I engage either to employ it, or to give my reaſon for not employing it.

" You will have frequent opportunities of obſerving that I am ſomewhat ſlow to change the remedies, or plan of cure, which I have once adopted, unleſs in urgent caſes, even though my ſucceſs at firſt is not very encouraging; and that I often attempt rather to vary the adminiſtration of the medicines firſt directed, by altering the form, and increaſing or diminiſhing the quantity of them. I hope you will not raſhly condemn this conduct, or attribute it to pride and obſtinacy in me, or to a wilful perſeverance in a practice which I found unſucceſsful, becauſe I was aſhamed to alter it, and confeſs that I had been in the wrong. That I may be partial to my own opinions, and to certain remedies, and that I may be mortified when they do not anſwer, I ſhall not preſume to deny. But I do not think that a bigotted attachment to particular remedies is my common or principal error. I hope therefore you will do me the juſtice to believe, that a ſeeming perſeverance in an unſucceſsful practice often proceeds from a very different motive; from a real conviction that it is neceſſary, in juſtice to our patients, to give our remedies a fair trial, both in point of quantity and time. Frequent changes of medicines, inſtead of giving a patient many chances for recovery, leave him none at all; but harraſs him to no purpoſe, and exhauſt his ſtrength: nay, the medicines given in that manner often counteract each others effects. Many good remedies prove uſeleſs, by being underdoſed; many others fail to ſucceed, by not being employed for a ſufficient time. It is the nature of many powerful remedies to act very ſlowly on the conſtitution, even when their effects at laſt are the moſt ſalutary and permanent: and it is the nature of ſome diſeaſes to yield very ſlowly even to the moſt active remedies. Since, then, I mean always to begin with that plan of cure and thoſe medicines which I think moſt

moſt likely to ſucceed, you cannot expect that I ſhould change it ſuddenly, or till I find that it is likely to fail; unleſs ſome circumſtance either occurs to myſelf, or is ſuggeſted to me by you, which ſhows the expediency or neceſſity of altering my plan. In ſuch caſes, you may be aſſured that it ſhall be altered immediately.

" I ſhall make no apology for the feebleneſs of my practice on many occaſions, and for the frequent employment of *placebos*. In caſes ſuch as often occur, in which nothing can be done, or in which nothing is needed, or in which I do not ſee at once what is required, and wiſh to have ſome time to conſider what I ſhould do, ſuch *placebos* are the very beſt remedies that I can preſcribe. It is even proper, for reaſons already mentioned, that patients ſhould ſometimes be deceived by ſuch remedies. They are not intended to deceive you, nor can they do it. But you muſt keep my ſecret, for the patient's benefit, as well as my credit.

" It may be more neceſſary to make ſome apology for certain pieces of practice which I occaſionally employ, that may appear to you rough at leaſt, if not raſh and dangerous. This I do ſometimes, from a deliberate conviction that it is my duty to give my patients every chance for recovery or relief. Many of the caſes which I treat in the clinical wards are almoſt or quite deſperate; eſpecially if no very powerful means of cure be tried: yet even in caſes ſeemingly deſperate, I have ſometimes been ſucceſsful by the help of remedies ſo ſtrong, that, if the patients had died, it might naturally have been thought, that I had killed them by the violence of the remedies which I preſcribed. In all ſuch caſes, whatever be the event of them, as you know the principle on which I proceed, I ſhall without ſcruple truſt to your candour and deliberate judgment. I ſurely need not caution you againſt a vulgar practice, in itſelf equally unreaſonable and illiberal, of blaming a phyſician for every piece of practice that does not ſucceed; and

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more eſpecially for every preſcription that ſeems to do, or that really does harm. The phyſician's preſcription may not ſave the patient; it may hurt him; it may haſten his death, or may even be the immediate cauſe of it; while yet before trial it appeared, and perhaps was in fact, the beſt or only chance that the patient had for his life. *Conjecturalis eſt ars medica*, ſays Celſus; and ſo it ever muſt be, from the nature of the ſubject on which it operates. This is no reproach to phyſicians; but it is a very great one not to know, that ſuch is the condition and the nature of medicine.

"Few phyſicians I believe can deny that they have loſt ſome patients, and, for my own part, I certainly cannot deny that I have loſt ſome, by the unexpected or violent effects of remedies: but I can ſay with confidence, that I know of very few ſuch inſtances in my own practice, and of a great many of the very oppoſite kind; I mean of patients, whom I loſt, who had at leaſt a chance for recovery, by means of remedies which I was afraid to try. As I am no caſuiſt, I preſume not to determine whether, in ſuch caſes, the ſins of commiſſion, or thoſe of omiſſion, be the greateſt: but I know well which are the moſt frequent, and the moſt pernicious."

It muſt not be thought, that the notion of clinical lectures, and of the practice of the Profeſſors in the wards of this Hoſpital, which I have thus endeavoured to explain, is peculiar to myſelf: nothing elſe, I am ſure, was ever intended by the Managers, when they permitted the Profeſſors of Medicine to practiſe in this Infirmary, and to read lectures on the caſes of their patients. Nor do I believe, that any perſon of competent information and judgment ever yet entertained a different notion of them. In proof of this,

I ſhall quote but a very few authorities, the moſt unexceptionable that can be conceived.

The firſt of theſe is the Hiſtory of the Royal Infirmary, compiled by the late Dr Stedman, and publiſhed in 1778, but without the name of the author. After mentioning the permiſſion given to all ſtudents of medicine, on paying a ſmall gratuity, to attend the Hoſpital, that they might have all the benefit that could be derived from the practice of the phyſicians and ſurgeons, he proceeds, (page 16th) to give an account of the eſtabliſhment of clinical lectures, in theſe words:

"Farther, the Managers, conſidering that the defect of clinical lectures in medical ſeminaries had often proved a ground of complaint, gave liberty to the Profeſſors of Medicine to lecture on ſuch caſes of the patients as they ſhould find moſt conducive to the inſtruction of the ſtudents. This was the only branch wanting in the medical courſe; and it may be conſidered as a practical illuſtration of what ſtudents have read by themſelves, or heard in the different claſſes. The field, from which the Profeſſor who hath the charge of this department ſelects his patients, being ample, a variety of curious and intereſting caſes may be ſuppoſed to preſent themſelves in the ſpace of ſix months. To hear, and, if ſtudents chooſe, to commit to writing, the hiſtories of theſe, their daily change of ſymptoms, the various preſcriptions, and a minute inveſtigation of the whole in the ſubſequent lectures, ſeems to be all that can be done for initiating them in the practice of medicine."

The next authority I ſhall quote is one much more recent, being exactly coeval with Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, and one of thoſe publications to which my former Memorial gave occaſion. It is entitled, "Outlines of a Plan for the Regulation of the Surgi-" cal Department of the Royal Infirmary, by John Thomſon, Fel-" low of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh." In this

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plan he propoſes, " That each ordinary Surgeon be allowed to give a clinical lecture, weekly or oftener; in which he ſhall explain to the ſtudents the nature of the caſes admitted into his wards, and the reaſons of his own practice; and that in the event of the ordinary ſurgeon declining the privilege of lecturing, it ſhall be permitted to one or other of the aſſiſtants to perform that duty."

Further, in explaining his plan, and ſtating the reaſons for every part of it, he adds, " It is ſuperfluous to inſiſt on the advantages which the ſtudents of ſurgery would derive from the regular and ſtated delivery of clinical lectures; for this mode of teaching medicine and ſurgery by example is the ſureſt and ſafeſt, if not the ſpeedieſt method, that can be followed in forming able and ſkilful practitioners.

" But if clinical lectures be in an eminent degree uſeful to ſtudents, it is not leſs certain, that they would indirectly benefit the patients. If there be any thing which can induce the raſh practitioner to pauſe, the inconſiderate to reflect, or the ill informed to ſeek for inſtruction, it is the neceſſity of explaining the grounds of his practice, and his opinions of diſeaſe, to an audience collected from the ſtudents of this Univerſity."

The only other authority on this point that I ſhall quote, is one alſo very recent, I believe rather ſubſequent to, than coeval with Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me. It is one which he and all his clients muſt admit to be unexceptionable and ſupreme; I mean the " Plan for the better Regulation of the Surgical Department of " the Royal Infirmary, ſubmitted to the conſideration of the Ma- " nagers of that Charitable Inſtitution, by the Royal College of " Surgeons;" that is to ſay, by that party, in number fifteen, of the Royal College of Surgeons, which at that time had got the upper hand by a majority of one; and to the beſt of my knowledge, information, and belief, acted under the moſt auſpicious guidance and immediate direction of Mr John Bell himſelf. Of

that plan, the eighth regulation is expreſſed in the following words. " That the Ordinary Surgeons ſhall have it in their power to give clinical lectures during their attendance, for three months each, or one of them for ſix months; and in caſe neither of them incline to do ſo, the conſulting Surgeons in rotation, according to ſeniority, ſhall be entitled to deliver ſuch lectures."

This regulation is explained and enforced by the following commentary. " The improvement of ſurgery is an object of the firſt importance to the community; and it appears to the College, that nothing leads more directly to ſuch improvement than the delivering of clinical lectures: for it not only requires on the part of the ſurgeon the moſt minute attention to the caſe, but obliges him alſo to ſtudy the profeſſion in all its branches, with aſſiduity and perſeverance."

I preſume it will hardly be maintained, even by the keeneſt of medical diſputants, that the word clinical, and conſequently the phraſe clinical lectures, have one meaning (the ſame as empirical or experimental) on the firſt floor of this Infirmary, and a totally different meaning up two pair of ſtairs: nor yet will it be pretended, that experiments in ſurgery are leſs cruel or horrible than experiments in phyſic: But ſurely nothing contained in either of thoſe propoſals for clinical lectures on the patients in the ſurgery wards, implies any inſinuation of trying experiments on them; or any one of thoſe marvellous and horrible powers and privileges which Mr John Bell ſo highly bepraiſes the Managers for conferring on the Medical Profeſſors who conduct the clinical lectures.

It is not enough to conſider the general tenor of Mr John Bell's account of the clinical lectures, for many particular paſſages in it well deſerve animadverſion. Moſt of theſe are marked by numerical references on the margin, of which references I ſhall now avail myſelf in conſidering the ſeveral paſſages which they point out, and

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which I wiſh to be viewed always in their full relation to the context: but that I may not ſeparate things naturally connected, I ſhall take them in the order which ſeems moſt convenient, not always in the order of the numbers on the margin.

N° 1. *A Practical School.* A practical ſchool is indeed an invaluable benefit, both in phyſic and ſurgery; and, far from being any injury to the patients, muſt be greatly for their good, provided only it be of the proper kind, and well conducted. But there is a ſtriking ambiguity in the phraſe *practical ſchool*, as here employed by Mr John Bell; and, to the beſt of my judgment, there is a correſponding and ſtudied obſcurity in the uſe which he makes of that and ſimilar expreſſions from end to end of his pamphlet. A *practical ſchool* of phyſic or ſurgery may mean a great hoſpital which ſtudents are permitted to attend, and conſequently to ſee and learn the practice of the phyſicians and ſurgeons who are ſelected by the managers to take care of the patients in their reſpective departments, and perhaps authoriſed or required to explain the reaſons of their practice, and their notions of the diſeaſes which they had treated, by reading clinical lectures on the caſes which had come under their care.

But a practical ſchool may alſo be underſtood to mean a great hoſpital, in which phyſicians and ſurgeons, eſpecially the youngeſt and moſt inexperienced of theſe, are to be allowed to learn their reſpective arts, by practiſing on the patients admitted into it, and for this purpoſe, are allowed to attend, in very quick ſucceſſion, on a ſyſtem of indiſcriminate rotation. That this was the meaning and intention of Deacon Kennedy and his friends, at the time when they made their odious bargain with the Managers of this Infirmary, is eſtabliſhed beyond all poſſibility of doubt; indeed it was avowed by themſelves: and I cannot think it very uncharitable to ſuppoſe that ſomething of the ſame meaning and intention

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may have been entertained by their worthy ſucceſſors, even to the preſent hour, notwithſtanding Mr John Bell's very ſtrong aſſertions, that a ſurgeon cannot, like a phyſician, improve by experience, and *bona fide* has no need of it, as he ought to be perfect in operations before he preſume to touch the knife. But that no injuſtice may be done to Mr John Bell and his clients on this very delicate point, I ſhall leave it to themſelves to ſay who are to be the *ſcholars* and who the *teachers* in that practical ſchool of ſurgery which they wiſh to have in this Infirmary. If the ſurgeons apprentices, and other ſtudents of phyſic, are to be the ſcholars, by ſeeing the practice and operations of the ſurgeons, I ſee no objections to ſuch a ſchool, which certainly muſt be at leaſt as good for the ſcholars, probably much better, when a few Surgeons are ſelected for the Hoſpital-duty, than when all the Surgeons of this city attend indiſcriminately by rotation. But if the ſcholars are themſelves to be the practitioners and operators, *purely becauſe they would be the better for more experience, which muſt be the caſe with all of them at firſt*, as Deacon Kennedy and his friends moſt ſagaciouſly argued, ſuch a ſchool muſt ever be a horrible abomination. This point it is unneceſſary to diſcuſs again: my opinion on it has been ſtated fully already. I ſhall therefore, in proof of it, only quote two ſhort paragraphs from my former Memorial, page 60. " To " thoſe who are learning the arts of phyſic and ſurgery, the im- " provement that may be fairly derived from a well-conducted " hoſpital is great beyond all calculation. But this ought to con- " ſiſt in their having opportunities of ſeeing and learning the prac- " tice of the moſt ſkilful, intelligent, and experienced phyſicians " and ſurgeons.

" Whatever is beſt for the patients, it is beſt for the ſtudents to " learn. Whatever is learned, or whatever real or ſuppoſed im- " provement is acquired at the expence of the poor patients, I " mean by any unneceſſary ſuffering, or danger, or harm to them,

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" is injuſtice and cruelty, inſtead of charity, benevolence, and " brotherly love to the ſufferers; it is a breach of truſt in thoſe " who do it, or permit it; it is an outrage on human nature."

It may be obſerved, that, in the long paſſage laſt quoted from the Anſwer to me, Mr John Bell labours hard to point out ſome reſemblance between the ſyſtem of indiſcriminate attendance of the Surgeons by rotation, and the attendance of ſeveral of the Profeſſors of Phyſic in rotation, with a view to give clinical lectures; and of courſe ſtates the matter in ſuch a way, as to give the preference ſtrongly to the mode of attendance of the Surgeons. Whatever reſemblance there may be between the two caſes, there can be no difficulty in pointing out an infinite difference between them. In the firſt place, the number of Medical Profeſſors in this Univerſity is but ſmall. There are but ſix ſuch Profeſſorſhips; and ſometimes two of theſe, that of Botany and Materia Medica, have been held by the ſame perſon. The Profeſſors of Phyſic, whatever their merit or demerit may be, have at leaſt been *ſelected*, by the patrons of the Univerſity, from among a great number of phyſicians, who would have been ambitious of that appointment. The patrons of the Univerſity have not even confined themſelves to a choice among the great number of phyſicians ſettled in Edinburgh. They have occaſionally given the appointment of Medical Profeſſor in this Univerſity to Phyſicians who had acquired reputation as Profeſſors in other univerſities.

Such was the caſe with Dr Cullen, Dr Black, and the preſent Dr Hope, who were well known, and highly eſteemed, in the Univerſity of Glaſgow; and with my Father, who had exerted himſelf to the utmoſt in teaching ſeveral branches of medicine in King's College Aberdeen, before they were appointed Profeſſors in the Univerſity of Edinburgh. From ſuch examples, and from the ſtill more ſtriking general fact of the high reputation which the medical ſchool of Edinburgh acquired in leſs than half a century,

tury, it may fairly be preſumed, that the patrons of it were equally honeſt and public ſpirited, in the choice which they made of the other Medical Profeſſors; and that upon the whole, they have been tolerably ſucceſsful in that matter; though no doubt Mr John Bell and his clients will think it right to make a great deduction from their credit in that reſpect, on account of their having twice beſtowed the appointment of Profeſſor on ſo ignorant and worthleſs a perſon as their very humble ſervant.

No body can ſuppoſe, that the patrons of the Univerſity ſhall always be directed by a kind of inſpiration, to make choice of men of ſuperior genius, as Profeſſors of Phyſic, or of any other ſcience in this Univerſity. Nor can any body ſuppoſe, that their appointment to a profeſſorſhip is to confer talents on a man which nature had denied him. But, though I am, by their appointment, one of the Medical Profeſſors myſelf, I muſt do them the juſtice to ſay, that they have had the ſagacity to contrive, and the honeſty to employ very faithfully, a ſimple but effectual expedient to prevent their Profeſſors from being either ignorant or lazy. The expedient is indeed ſo admirable and infallible, and withal ſo cheap, that it ought to be generally known. It conſiſts in giving us very ſmall, or no ſalaries; ſo that our emoluments, which for a long time paſt have been very conſiderable, ariſe almoſt entirely from the number of our pupils; and this again from our own diligence in learning and teaching the ſeveral branches of ſcience which we profeſs. I truſt Mr John Bell and his clients will know where I got the two following lines; and, whatever they may think of the poetry, will at leaſt acknowledge the truth of them.

Qui docet indoctos, licet indoctiſſimus eſſet,
Ipſe brevi reliquis doctior eſſe queat.

A Profeſſor of Phyſic in this Univerſity who does not ſeriouſly ſtudy and underſtand his own profeſſion, muſt, in the firſt place, become an object of contempt to his colleagues and to the ſtudents; and, in the next place, he muſt ſtarve; for the ſtudents will not attend his lectures, and the reaſon of this muſt be immediately and generally known.

On theſe principles, I ſhould conceive, *a priori*, that there muſt be an infinite difference between the attendance of the whole ſix Medical Profeſſors by rotation in the clinical wards, if this ſhould ever happen, and the attendance of twenty, thirty, or forty Surgeons by rotation in the ſurgery wards, juſt to acquire a little experience and dexterity in their profeſſion. But the well-known fact with reſpect to the attendance of the Medical Profeſſors in the clinical wards, puts this point in a much clearer and ſtronger light. Far from being eager to attend there, each in his turn, for the ſake of the improvement and experience which they might acquire by ſo doing, many of them could never be induced, either by the emoluments of that office, or their own acknowledged ſenſe of duty, to take any ſhare of the clinical lectures. Dr John Rutherford, the original Profeſſor of the Practice of Phyſic in this Univerſity, had the merit of beginning the *Medical* clinical lectures, and had them all to himſelf for ſeven or eight years; but as ſoon as he found that ſome of his colleagues choſe to undertake them, he withdrew from them: this was about fifty years ago. For ſome years afterwards, Dr Alexander Monro *primus*, Dr Whyte, and Dr Cullen, had the clinical lectures among them. From 1766 to 1773, all the time that my father was a Profeſſor in this Univerſity, he and Dr Cullen had the winter clinical lectures between them; during which time, I believe, not more than than one or two ſummer courſes of clinical lectures were given, and theſe by Dr Francis Home only. Soon after my father's death, Dr Cullen's family prevailed on him to withdraw from the clinical lectures;

perceiving clearly, that the labour of them, in addition to his other academical and profeſſional duties, was too much for him. Dr Plummer, Dr Alſton, the preſent Dr Alexander Monro ſenior, Dr Black, and, what is ſtill more remarkable, the late Dr John Hope, though he was a Phyſician to the Hoſpital, never would take any ſhare of the clinical lectures. When I was appointed Profeſſor of the Theory of Phyſic in 1776, not one of the four ſenior Profeſſors, Dr Monro, Dr Cullen, Dr Hope, and Dr Black, would take any ſhare of them: of courſe, they fell to the two junior Profeſſors, Dr Francis Home and myſelf; and on the ſame principle, we had them entirely between us two for fourteen years. I had the merit of prevailing on the preſent Dr Daniel Rutherford to take a ſhare of the clinical lectures; but that I found no eaſy matter to accompliſh; nor indeed did I get it accompliſhed, till he was appointed one of the ordinary Phyſicians of the Infirmary, which I think was not till about four years after he had been appointed Profeſſor of Phyſic and Botany: and I believe I have had at leaſt as much merit, and as much difficulty, in prevailing on Dr Rutherford to continue to take his ſhare of the clinical lectures; nor do I believe that I ſhould have ſucceeded in that object, and I certainly ſhould not have continued to take a ſhare of them myſelf, if the labour had not been made lighter, or at leaſt leſs frequent in its return, by our junior colleagues, Dr Duncan, Dr Hope, and Dr James Home, ſharing it with us. Though I have beſtowed much good advice upon him for that purpoſe, I have not yet prevailed on Dr Alexander Monro junior to take any ſhare of the clinical lectures. The plain truth is, that they are ſo ſevere a labour, both in point of attention and time, that all of us feel them very irkſome, even though our time of attendance is but three months; and as clinical lectures cannot be prepared beforehand, as thoſe on every other branch of phyſic may be, and ought to be, the inceſſant drudgery of preparing them from day to day, and the conſequent interruption of all other

other ſtudy, and much other buſineſs, even for ſo ſhort a time as three months, is often very inconvenient, and ſometimes quite intolerable.

N° 2. " For the performing of theſe duties, clinical wards are " appointed: this is the department *of your Hoſpital which we now* " *proceed to explain.*" This is wonderfully obliging in Mr John Bell; the more ſo, as it ſeems to be a very unneceſſary piece of trouble that he has taken. He has not mentioned *to whom* he means to *explain* it; but from his expreſſion of *your Hoſpital*, it ſhould ſeem that the explanation was intended for the benefit of the Managers: yet ſurely they could have no need of any ſuch explanation, any more than of being told their own Chriſtian and ſurnames, their ſtations or profeſſions, or their places of abode. Whatever the clinical lectures are, or were intended to be, muſt have been perfectly known to the Managers from firſt to laſt: and unleſs the Managers had known and intended ſuch things, they could not have been entitled, either ſeriouſly or ironically, to thoſe extravagant praiſes which Mr John Bell has laviſhed upon them, for permitting ſuch lectures on the caſes of the patients in the Hoſpital of which they had the care.

The Clinical Profeſſors, and their ſtudents, could have as little occaſion for any ſuch explanation; for they muſt have known perfectly every thing relating to the clinical lectures.

Moreover, the Managers, the Clinical Profeſſors, and the Students, muſt all have known perfectly many things relating to the clinical lectures, which are abſolutely inconſiſtent with the account or explanation that Mr John Bell has given of them.

Some of theſe things I ſhall beg leave to ſtate, from the moſt authentic documents, for the ſatisfaction of the curious, and of the public; for whoſe edification Mr John Bell's account of them ſeems plainly to have been intended.

The beginning and progreſs of the clinical lectures has been briefly as follows.

February 1. 1748. The Preſes of the meeting of the Managers (Dr John Clerk) informed them, that Dr Rutherford had intended to begin a courſe of clinical lectures to his own ſtudents, and that he deſigned to have applied to the Managers for the uſe of the operation-room in the Infirmary to give theſe lectures in, and to have begun them this winter; but that as he was determined to admit no ſtudent to attend them who had not a ticket for the Infirmary, leſt that might hurt the funds of the Hoſpital, and as he found, on enquiry, that ſome of the ſtudents who wiſhed to attend his clinical lectures had not ſuch tickets, he choſe to poſtpone giving thoſe lectures till next winter, to publiſh his advertiſement of them in October, and to make it a condition, that all who were to attend them ſhould have Infirmary-tickets. But the Managers, as ſoon as they were informed of theſe things, conſidering, that the year of attendance, by virtue of an Infirmary-ticket, (which at that time began at Michaelmas), was far advanced, and thinking it unreaſonable to deſire the ſtudents to take tickets at that time, and judging that thoſe lectures might be of very great ſervice to the ſtudents, and alſo of advantage to the Hoſpital, very handſomely and liberally recommended to Dr Rutherford to begin his clinical lectures immediately, agreed to give him the uſe of a room in the Infirmary for that purpoſe, and gave orders that all his ſtudents ſhould be admitted. This, I believe, was the only time that ſtudents were allowed to attend the clinical lectures who had not Infirmary-tickets.

The next mention of the clinical lectures that I can find in the minute-book of the Managers is of date 23d January 1749, and is part of the ſtatutes of the Royal Infirmary, which, after much conſideration, were at that time finally adopted and permanently eſtabliſhed. It is in theſe words: " The Profeſſors of Medicine in

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" the Univerſity may, *during their attendance*, give clinical lectures " to the licenſed ſtudents on the caſes of the patients of this Infir- " mary, at any hour, excepting the ordinary hour of viſiting, and " may have the peruſal of the ledger of the patients."

The next mention that I find of the clinical lectures in the minutes of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, is of date 1ſt January 1750, and is in the following words. " The Managers alſo " conſidering that the money received laſt year from ſtudents for " tickets was L. 76, 12 s. Sterling more than what was received " in the year 1748, which probably was in a good meaſure owing " to the clinical lectures given by Dr Rutherford laſt year; they " likewiſe authoriſe and appoint the treaſurer to cauſe fit up im- " mediately a ward to accommodate patients proper for Dr Ruther- " ford to give his clinical lectures upon, which he may take in as " he wants them, theſe patients not exceeding ten in number, " during the three months in which he gives theſe lectures, the " expence of maintenance of which patients, the Managers hope, " will be much more than made up to the houſe by the additional " number of tickets which will be taken out merely on account of " theſe lectures."

It is worth while here to remark, that the additional ſum of L. 76, 12 s. received from ſtudents the firſt year that clinical lectures were given in the Hoſpital beyond what had been received the year before, ſmall as it may appear to us in itſelf, was by no means ſmall in compariſon of the whole money received for Infirmary-tickets; the whole amount of which for the year 1749 was but L. 172, 4 s.; the year before it had been but about L. 96: ſo that this branch of the revenue of the Hoſpital was at that time, and ſeemingly in conſequence of thoſe lectures, nearly doubled.

7th January 1751, the number of clinical patients was increaſed to fifteen.

6th

6th January 1752, the number of them was increaſed to twenty, which has ever ſince been conſidered as the regular number of the eſtabliſhment; but with a kind of *bona fide* latitude, well underſtood both by the Profeſſors and the Managers, that the average number of the patients for the whole time that the clinical wards are open ſhall not exceed that eſtabliſhment. But as it often happens, that for many weeks together the clinical wards are not half filled, ſo, on the other hand, they are occaſionally completely filled, in which ſtate they contain, without crowding, nine-and-twenty patients. On ſome extraordinary emergencies they have even been crowded, ſo as to contain two or three and thirty patients; but this, for many obvious reaſons, is never done without neceſſity, and never is long continued.

With reſpect to the privileges given to the Medical Profeſſors, for the purpoſe of giving clinical lectures, all that I find mentioned in the Managers minutes, and all I ever heard of or underſtood to be enjoyed by them, in addition to what is already quoted in the preceding page, is what follows.

" January 7th 1751, it was enacted and declared, That the Cli-
" nical Lectures to be given by the Profeſſors of Medicine, which,
" by the ſtatute as it is expreſſed, ſeem to be confined to the time
" of their attendance in courſe, ſhould be ſo extended as to be
" given at any time they ſhould find moſt beneficial to the
" Students, without the limitation aforeſaid."

This related to the ſyſtem which at that time prevailed, but which was ſoon afterwards aboliſhed, of all the Fellows of the Royal College of Phyſicians, including of courſe the Medical Profeſſors, attending by rotation in the Infirmary.

Though, by theſe regulations of the Managers, all the Profeſſors of Phyſic were permitted to give clinical lectures, it does not appear that any of them, except Dr Rutherford, choſe to avail themſelves of that privilege till winter 1756-7. " On the 27th
" November

" November 1756, Dr Alexander Monro *primus*, Dr Cullen, and " Dr White addreſſed a letter to the Managers, offering to aſſiſt in " the Clinical Lectures, if the Managers thought it could be of uſe " to the Infirmary, and ſhould think proper to give the neceſſaay " orders for that purpoſe." That winter accordingly the clinical lectures were given by four Profeſſors, in the following order: Dr Monro, Dr White, Dr Rutherford, and Dr Cullen: and that, I believe, was the laſt time that Dr Rutherford took any ſhare in them.

As I ſhould be very ſorry to be ſuſpected of ſuppreſſing the ſmalleſt particle of any privilege granted by the Managers to any one of the Clinical Profeſſors, I muſt mention a particular privilege that was granted to one of them individually and perſonally, namely Dr Rutherford, at their meeting 5th February 1750. " The Managers authoriſed Dr Rutherford to open the dead bodies " of any of his clinical patients who ſhould happen to die under " cure, as he ſhould think proper, without the neceſſity of applying " to the Managers for a warrant for that purpoſe, as is required " by the ſtatutes in the caſes of other patients who happen to die." But, to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, this privilege was never granted to any other Clinical Profeſſor; and I am certain at leaſt, that in the time of Dr Cullen and my father, as well as during my own long incumbency, we have been obliged, on ſuch occaſions, juſt like the ordinary Phyſicians, to apply for the regular permiſſion ſigned by two of the Managers.

After carefully examining the minutes of the Managers from the time when the clinical lectures were firſt mentioned in 1748, to the end of the year 1760, full four years after they were put on that footing on which they have ever ſince continued, I can find no veſtige of any other permiſſions, powers, or privileges granted by the Managers to the Profeſſors of Phyſic in conducting their practice in the Hoſpital and their clinical lectures; nothing like thoſe

marvellous

marvellous and horrible powers which Mr John Bell ſays the Managers granted to the Profeſſors of Phyſic; and no appearance of the Managers ever having ſuppoſed that their own *delegated powers extended omnipotently over the lives of their fellow-creatures.*

N° 8. "*As for experiments in ſurgery, we know of none,*" &c. If ſo, and if *clinical* has that meaning which Mr John Bell has been pleaſed to give it, then clinical lectures on ſurgery, which Mr John Bell, and his friends, and clients, and profeſſional brethren, have ſtrongly, and, what is more wonderful, but certainly true, *unanimouſly* recommended, as not only uſeful, but highly important, which Mr Ruſſell has for many years been accuſtomed to give with great approbation, and for the giving of which he has lately been appointed a Regius Profeſſor, *muſt* be not only uſeleſs, but *impoſſible.* On the other hand, if *clinical* does not mean experimental in ſurgery, it is difficult to underſtand how it can have that horrible meaning in phyſic. Such difficulties Mr John Bell and his clients may conſider and ſolve at their leiſure. In the mean time, I beg leave to ſay, that, to my certain knowledge, every piece of practice, both in phyſic and ſurgery, is an *experiment*; nay, a precarious experiment. We have no abſolute certainty of the reſult being juſt what we wiſh: in ſome caſes the chance of ſucceſs is very great, perhaps a hundred or a thouſand to one, in favour of our patient: in other caſes it is very ſmall, perhaps ten, twenty, or forty to one againſt our patient. In ſome caſes, even in phyſic, the experiment is attended with danger: and in many caſes in ſurgery the danger of the practice or experiment, as in all thoſe operations which are called *capital*, is incomparably greater than it is in the practice of phyſic. But be the danger greater or leſs, it is the duty of the Phyſician or Surgeon to give his patient his beſt or only chance for recovery or relief. In numberleſs caſes the diſeaſe requiring ſuch practice or operation, if left to itſelf,

itſelf, would ſoon prove fatal; and in many others would continue, and probably increaſe for months or years, and at laſt prove fatal; but in the mean time, would keep the patient in torture, deprived of every enjoyment, and unfitted for every duty in life.

But perhaps Mr John Bell and his clients may chooſe to ſay, that by experiments they meant only new experiments; that is, the firſt trials of new modes of practice, new medicines, new preparations of old medicines, the firſt performing of newly propoſed operations, or of old operations in a new manner; and that therefore, by their aſſertion, that they knew of no experiments in their profeſſion, they meant only, that no new experiments, new operations, or improvements of old operations, or new practices of any kind, were ever to be attempted in ſurgery. Even in this limited and improper ſenſe of the term experiment, it may eaſily be ſhown, that their aſſertion, of there being no experiments in ſurgery, is not only groſsly erroneous, but almoſt abſurd; at leaſt ſo repugnant both to reaſon and to well known matter of fact, that it is *impoſſible* they ſhould have believed it. It is ſelf-evident, that every operation in ſurgery, and every peculiar mode of performing it, and indeed every piece of practice, either in ſurgery or phyſic, even thoſe that are now the moſt familiar, the moſt generally practiſed, the ſafeſt, the moſt ſalutary, and in every reſpect the beſt, were at one time perfectly new experiments. Unleſs ſuch experiments had been made, there never could have been either phyſic or ſurgery. After any number of the practices ſo introduced had become well eſtabliſhed, and ſo familiar as not to be called or thought experiments, it is equally ſelf-evident, that unleſs further new experiments had been tried, there could have been no improvements either in phyſic or in ſurgery. I do not believe that any individual of common ſenſe, however ſmall his knowledge of phyſic or ſurgery may be, can ſeriouſly wiſh that ſuch new experiments had been prevented at any time, either by legal prohibi-

tion, or by the ſentiments and manners of different nations; and therefore I diſtruſt what we are told of the laws and cuſtoms of the ancient Egyptians in this reſpect. It is ſaid, that by their laws their phyſicians were obliged to follow exactly the rules of practice laid down in their ſyſtem of phyſic, which it was pretended they derived from Hermes. If a phyſician followed theſe rules, he was regarded as blameleſs though his patient died; but if in his practice he deviated from them, and his patient died, he was put to death. I doubt whether the ingenuity of man could have contrived a more effectual bar to every attempt at improvement. Suppoſing, in compliment to Diodorus Siculus, whoſe authority I take to be none of the beſt, that the Egyptians had really adopted that moſt abſurd inſtitution, it is evidently impoſſible to wiſh that any other nation ſhould, at any period of its hiſtory, have done the ſame. We know pretty well what the ſtate of phyſic and ſurgery was in the time of Hippocrates, about two thouſand two hundred years ago: yet ſurely, with all due deference to the venerable father of phyſic, it may be ſaid, that by far the greater number of the moſt powerful medicines, the beſt operations, and the beſt practices of every kind, have been introduced, that is, have been new experiments, ſince his time. The ſame conſiderations are equally applicable and deciſive with reſpect to the ſtate of phyſic and ſurgery, every century, every year, every day, ſince the time of Hippocrates. In the courſe of the laſt century, in the latter half of it, in the laſt quarter of it, many great improvements have been introduced, both in phyſic and ſurgery; and unleſs phyſicians and ſurgeons become miraculouſly ſtupid and lazy, many improvements, both in phyſic and ſurgery, will be propoſed in the courſe of the preſent century, perhaps in the courſe of this year. The aſſertion, therefore, that there are no experiments in ſurgery, muſt imply, either that ſurgery is incapable of improvement, or that no improvements in it are to be permitted. And if Mr John Bell and his

his clients believed what he aſſerted and they ſanctioned, they muſt alſo have believed one or other of thoſe abſurdities: worſe and worſe, of all the improvements in ſurgery which the ſaid Mr John Bell is to contrive and propoſe, and with all his eloquence to recommend to his brethren and to the public, great and numerous as they muſt be, not one can ever be adopted, or even tried: and worſt of all, that moſt deſpicable and deteſtable work, which has the impudence to call itſelf "A Syſtem of Surgery, by Benjamin "Bell," in ſix ſquat, fat, vulgar-looking octavo volumes, the very ſight of any one of which is enough to make a man ſick, muſt remain the ſtandard-book in ſurgery, not for forty or fifty years only, which probably is all that the author himſelf, or any of his beſt friends, ever expected or thought poſſible, but to all eternity. Can Mr John Bell, or any of his friends, wiſh for this? or think of it without horror? or fail to ſee, that the only poſſible way to prevent that moſt dreadful of all calamities to ſurgery and to mankind, is to try new experiments in ſurgery, and to introduce new practices, no matter whether better or worſe than his, provided only they be different from thoſe which the ſaid Benjamin recommends, and many hundreds or thouſands of ſurgeons at this time employ.

Theſe ſelf-evident truths with reſpect to the abſolute neceſſity of new experiments in all ages, paſt, preſent, and future, firſt for the beginning, and afterwards for the improvement of ſurgery as well as of phyſic, Mr John Bell and his clients may have diſregarded; but this can have proceeded only from their never having attended to the ſubject: for if they will think of it but for one minute, I am convinced (notwithſtanding their moſt *liberal* and *candid* declaration, that "they *unequivocally approve*, in the prac-"tice of the medical profeſſion, a *latitude* which they *dare not admit* "*in their own*)" that not one of them, individually or collectively, will chooſe to diſpute any of thoſe propoſitions.

As to the truly experimental nature of all the oldeſt and commoneſt practices, either in phyſic or ſurgery, the uncertainty of the event, and even the danger of many of them; all theſe things are ſo generally known, and ſo well underſtood, and in moſt caſes ſo juſtly weighed by patients before they ſubmit to any capital operation in ſurgery, or even to ſome pieces of medical practice, that I could not *à priori* have ſuſpected that Mr John Bell, or any one of his clients, could be ignorant of them; and accordingly read with ſome aſtoniſhment, what he has aſſerted ſo roundly, and his clients have ſanctioned as uſual, in the paragraph at preſent under review, (No. 9.) " When a white ſwelling is plainly incurable, it " is no experiment to cut off the limb, and there is but one way in " which the operation can be performed!"

Merely cutting off a leg can hardly be called an experiment; for it is a matter of almoſt mechanical certainty, juſt like ſawing off the leg of a table or the bough of a tree, at leaſt I never heard of any patient who was a candidate for amputation, and fairly under the hands of a ſurgeon for that purpoſe, being diſappointed, with reſpect to getting rid of his leg or arm; as many thouſands have been whoſe ambition extended only to blood-letting or tooth-drawing. It is juſt after the leg is cut off that the *experiment begins.* The purpoſe of amputation, as of every other operation in ſurgery, and of almoſt every piece of chirurgical practice, I mean eſpecially all kinds of local applications or dreſſings, is to remove an impediment to the proceſs of nature in performing a cure. This is one of the moſt general and important differences between the practice of phyſic and that of ſurgery: the greater part of the phyſician's practice conſiſts in exciting, promoting, reſtraining, and ſometimes imitating by art, various operations of nature in the human body; many of which certainly have, and all of which have been ſuppoſed to have a ſalutary tendency; but in many caſes are almoſt or altogether a-wanting; in other caſes are too feeble and inſufficient; and in

in many caſes are too violent, ſo as to be attended with great and immediate danger. Every body knows, that neither phyſic nor ſurgery can do any good to a dead body; and moſt people will believe without much difficulty, that in a living body, from the failure of the powers of life, approaching very near to the ſtate of a dead one, both phyſic and ſurgery would be equally unavailing. It is no leſs certain, though not quite ſo obvious, that in numberleſs caſes the powers of nature alone, with no aſſiſtance, or worſe than none, from our art, accompliſh the cure; while the Doctor, like Belinda's Betty, " is praiſed for labours not his " own." The ſame powers, whoſe operations may ſometimes be a-wanting, or too feeble, at other times too violent, irregular, or wrong directed, are juſt as neceſſary for the ſucceſs of any chirurgical operation, as for that of any piece of medical practice. Not only an amputation, but the ſmalleſt inciſion that ever a ſurgeon makes, would be an incurable, and ſoon a mortal wound, were it not for the healing proceſs of nature. I know of no cure, either in phyſic or ſurgery, for the ſcratch of a pin; and as to ſuch a capital operation as cutting off a limb, I thought every ſurgeon had known that it was an experiment which neceſſarily implied many and great dangers. The patient may faint and die during the operation, or immediately after it, from loſs of blood, and partly perhaps even from pain; in a few hours after, the blood may burſt again from the veſſels, in ſuch quantity, that the patient ſhall die before any aſſiſtance can be procured, or in ſpite of the immediate aſſiſtance of the moſt ſkilful ſurgeon. The precautions uſually taken to prevent theſe dangers, ſhow abundantly that they are real and well known. Suppoſing all danger from loſs of blood to be prevented; violent or bad inflammation, followed by gangrene, may come upon the ſtump, and be fatal to the patient in leſs than a week; as in the caſe quoted from Mr John Bell's own book, I mean his Principles of Surgery, vol. 1. page 369, (page 275th of this

this Memorial): a locked jaw may take place in a few days, or a few weeks, and probably be fatal in three or four days: according to his own account of the horrid ſtate of the ſurgeons wards in this Hoſpital, twice every year, perhaps for many weeks each time, a patient, after ſuch an operation, would probably, or at ſome ſeaſons certainly, be attacked with hoſpital-gangrene, and have but a ſmall chance of eſcaping with his life. Suppoſing the patient to eſcape all theſe dangers, he yet may not recover; tedious and bad ſuppuration may take place, attended with hectic fever, which, after waſting him miſerably for ſeveral months, would at laſt prove fatal.

As to Mr John Bell's aſſertion, that *there is but one way in which the operation* (cutting off a limb) *can be performed*, it is altogether marvellous and incomprehenſible. Things muſt be come to a ſad paſs indeed with him, if he can quietly ſubmit to the diſgrace of cutting off a leg in the ſame bungling butcher-like manner that his dear nameſake Benjamin Bell, or Mr Ruſſell, or Mr Wardrope, &c. &c. would do. He is not the man of genius that I take him for, if he would not rather ſnip off the leg with a pair of crooked ſciſſars, or bite it off with his teeth, than ſubmit to the indignity of doing as they do, or offering ſuch violence to his conſcience, as to ſay that they did, or ever could do right. But there is no danger of his ever being reduced to ſuch a dire dilemma. I know three or four ways of cutting off a limb: and I dare ſay Mr John Bell knows, or at the worſt could eaſily contrive, as many more; and prove any one of them to be infinitely better than the beſt of thoſe at preſent in uſe. But he need not even take that trouble. Within my memory a new mode of cutting off legs was introduced, (or an old one revived, I am uncertain which), and ſtrongly recommended by an eminent ſurgeon, Mr Alanſon. It was called the Flap operation, or cutting with Flaps. I remember to have heard ſome diſputes about it: for as there were

Flappers,

Flappers, of courſe there muſt have been Anti-flappers: and as the diſpute began little more than twenty years ago, far from being ended as yet, it can ſcarce be arrived at full maturity and violence. Mr Benjamin Bell muſt be either a Flapper or an Anti-flapper: and I humbly conjecture, (for I do not know the fact), that if he is a Flapper, Mr John Bell will be a determined Anti-flapper; but that if Benjamin is an Anti-flapper, John will be a moſt ſtrenuous Flapper. But flap or no flap, he certainly may take his choice of ſeveral ways of cutting off a leg.

N° 10. *But it is an experiment, and a bold one too, when arſenic is given to cure that ſlight intermitting fever which bark and wine will poſitively cure.*

From the latter part of this ſentence I infer, that the intermitting fevers which Mr John Bell has met with in his practice, juſt like bachelors wives and maids children, have been always very tractable. But I preſume any phyſician who has had but a few years experience, can teſtify, that intermitting fevers, though in this country they are generally ſlight, and eaſily cured by bark and wine, or very often by bark without wine, are not always very eaſily cured by thoſe remedies, or by any others that I am acquainted with. So ſlight a circumſtance as an eaſt wind, which is no ſcarce commodity in this country at one ſeaſon of the year, will ſometimes baffle a phyſician, with all his bark and wine, for ſeveral weeks; nay, after his patients have been cured, as he ſuppoſed, poſitively and eaſily, the ſaid eaſt wind will ſometimes bring them back their intermittent fevers, more ſevere and more obſtinate than before. Even without any eaſt wind, various morbid conditions of the body itſelf will ſometimes fruſtrate the good effects of the bark, and perhaps render the adminiſtration of it difficult, if not quite impoſſible. Sometimes, but rarely I believe in this country, wine is found abſolutely pernicious; and

various

various evacutions, eſpecially blood-letting, and low diet, are ſalutary, and even neceſſary, in ſuch fevers.

I can gueſs why Mr John Bell ſhould mention the adminiſtration of *arſenic* in the paſſage under review; as it is well calculated to excite indignation and horror in the ignorant and vulgar, and cannot fail to be a noble ſubject for declamation to the malevolent, who probably never heard of arſenic but as a ſubſtance often employed with great ſucceſs to poiſon rats, and ſometimes to poiſon Chriſtians. But that Mr John Bell, or any of his clients, ſhould really think the adminiſtration of arſenic, as a cure for intermittent fevers, a *bold experiment*, appears to me quite incredible. None of them ſurely can be ignorant, that for many years, arſenic has, in many places, even of England, been very generally uſed with ſafety and ſucceſs for the cure of ſuch fevers. They ſurely muſt have known, that there was good reaſon to believe, that certain ſecret or quack medicines, eſpecially the taſteleſs ague-drop, which were found remarkably ſucceſsful in curing agues, and were in general uſe among the lower orders in ſome parts of England, owed their virtue to a ſmall portion of arſenic which they contained. They ſurely muſt have known, that about ſeventeen years ago an eminent phyſician, Dr Fowler of Stafford, publiſhed an account of his adminiſtration of arſenic in ſuch fevers, and of the great and uniform ſucceſs of it, when the medicine was given with due caution, and in proper, that is, very ſmall doſes. They ſurely know, that it has been employed ſince that time, openly and avowedly, by many practitioners, with equal ſucceſs. They ſurely know, that the proper doſes of arſenic, which may be given with perfect ſafety, and with almoſt the certainty of ſucceſs, in intermittent fevers, are juſt as well aſcertained as the proper doſes of opium, foxglove, mercury, antimony, or any other of our commoneſt and moſt powerful medicines. It would therefore be fooliſh, as well as unneceſſary, to tell them, but

for

for the edification of others, who muſt be intereſted in this matter, and are not in the ſecret, I think it right to mention the general facts or principles with reſpect to the adminiſtration of arſenic. It is perfectly aſcertained, that the twentieth part of a grain of it, taken twice or thrice a-day, is too ſmall a doſe to cure an intermittent fever, or even to produce any ſenſible effects on a grown perſon of ordinary ſtrength; and that the eighth part of a grain, taken twice or thrice a-day, is too ſtrong a doſe for ſuch a perſon, as it generally produces ſome diſorder in the ſtomach or bowels. Of courſe, the doſe for a grown perſon is within thoſe limits; generally from the tenth to the ſixteenth part of a grain, twice or thrice a-day. Thoſe very minute quantities of the medicine are eaſily obtained, not by weighing out and ſubdividing a ſingle grain of it, but in the ſame manner that minute quantities of other active medicines are uſually aſcertained, by diſſolving a ſmall but definite quantity of the medicine, in a large quantity of water, or ſome other liquid, the proportion of which to the arſenic diſſolved in it is preciſely known. The ſolution recommended by Dr Fowler, and moſt commonly employed, is of the ſtrength of ſixty-four grains (ſomewhat more than half a quarter of an ounce) to an Engliſh pint of liquid: that ſolution is given by drops, like the tincture of opium, and many other active medicines: eight drops contain the twentieth, twenty drops the eighth part of a grain of arſenic: and the common doſe of it is from ten to ſixteen drops for a grown perſon, and four or five for a young child. By ſuch doſes, ſome thouſands of patients every year are cured of intermitting fevers, without difficulty, or danger, or inconvenience, or bad conſequences of any kind; and, what to many of them is of much importance, without expence. The Peruvian bark is ſo coſtly a medicine, and the quantities of it required for curing intermitting fevers are often ſo great, amounting to many ounces, eſpecially if the patients cannot remove from

the unhealthy marſhy ſituations where they caught their fevers, that they cannot afford to be cured by it. Moreover, many patients, eſpecially children, cannot or will not take, or, if they do take, cannot retain the Peruvian bark: but the arſenic, in proper doſes, any perſon may take without diſguſt, nay, without knowing it. I therefore think it highly probable, that the arſenic will ſoon ſuperſede the uſe of the Peruvian bark as a cure for intermittent fevers, and very poſſibly may ſoon after be itſelf ſuperſeded by ſome other medicine of equal or greater efficacy; and leſs danger, if by any accident too much of it ſhould be taken. But in the mean time, with the cautions already mentioned, and perhaps ſome others, ſuch as the addition of certain ſubſtances, which are conceived, whether rightly or not I am uncertain, to correct its bad, or improve its good qualities, it muſt be regarded as on the ſame footing with antimony, opium, and many other powerful medicines. No body is afraid to give or to take opium as a medicine, though a very ſmall quantity of it would certainly be fatal. Not having as yet found a ſafe place to try ſuch dangerous experiments, I cannot tell exactly how few grains of it might kill a grown perſon, or how ſmall a part of a grain of it might kill a very young child: but I ſhrewdly ſuſpect, that much leſs than is commonly ſuppoſed might effectually do the buſineſs, either of the man or the child. Yet we apprehend no danger from giving one or two grains of it to a man, or the tenth or twentieth part of a grain of it to a child; and we find no difficulty in meaſuring thoſe ſmall doſes with ſufficient accuracy, by giving the infant one or two ſmall drops, and the adult thirty or forty drops, of the common tincture of opium.

As to antimony, it is well known that a very ſmall quantity of ſome of the preparations of it will produce the moſt violent effects on the ſtomach and bowels, effects not very different from thoſe of arſenic; and that many people have been poiſoned by it. It has been

been ſaid, (but, like all other important and ſome frivolous points in phyſic, this has been much diſputed), that the very name by which it has been known for ſome centuries paſt, was given to it in conſequence of a parcel of lazy monks having been poiſoned by it, which their friends and acquaintance thought a good joke, and therefore called the medicine *Antimonium*, wiſhing by this term to denote ſomething like Monks-bane. But it is certain at leaſt, that about 250 years ago it was formally prohibited and condemned as an arrant poiſon, not only by our moſt noble Faculty, but by the Parliament of Paris. Yet this very active and almoſt poiſonous drug, when properly prepared, and adminiſtered in very ſmall doſes, is a uſeful medicine, and has even become ſuch a favourite with many people, that they inſiſt upon taking and giving ſome of the preparations of it, eſpecially James's powder, on very ſlight occaſions, ſuch as a common cold; and often, as I think, from mere idleneſs, or becauſe they have nothing elſe to do.

Not only thoſe medicines, which, as they produce violent and ſometimes fatal effects, though given but in very ſmall quantity, may naturally be regarded as poiſons, but ſome medicines againſt which no ſuch objections can be urged, have often been the objects of great terror and ſtrong prejudices, both among phyſicians and their patients, and have ſometimes been made the ſubjects of the moſt virulent and malevolent declamation: for example, the Peruvian bark itſelf, againſt which, even in the cure of intermittent fevers, prejudices were long entertained, as ſtrong and as inveterate as any that Mr John Bell, or the keeneſt of his clients, can entertain or profeſs againſt arſenic in the cure of the ſame diſeaſes. Such prejudices againſt the bark, when judiciouſly employed, are now regarded with general and well-merited contempt: and ſo, no doubt, will the prejudices againſt the uſe of arſenic be, when it is not left to the raſh, indiſcriminate, and per-

haps knaviſh adminiſtration of quacks, but given openly, and with all neceſſary cautions, by regular practitioners.

The beſt proof and illuſtration that I can give, or indeed conceive, of this point, and one which, in juſtice to Mr John Bell, I think myſelf bound to mention, is, that the ſhort period of two years has produced a great change in the ſentiments of the ſaid John Bell with reſpect to all the three points in queſtion. In that time he has learned to think more reverently of intermittent fevers, to be leſs confident in the powers of the Peruvian bark, as poſitively (by which I preſume he meant certainly and univerſally) curing them, and has even learned to be leſs afraid of giving arſenic for that purpoſe. I cannot help thinking it a curious and inſtructive circumſtance, that he ſhould be the only perſon that ever yet propoſed to me to adminiſter arſenic to a patient. This patient laboured under an obſtinate intermittent fever, which had baffled all my ſkill, and reſiſted the powers of the bark and other remedies for ſome time, and had been equally uncivil to Mr John Bell, and the bark which he preſcribed, for a much longer time before I was called in. I preſume he will remember the caſe to which I allude, as it occurred ſo lately as the beginning of December laſt, and as there were in it the following very ſtriking particulars. The patient (whom for the preſent I ſhall call Dr H. M. L.) was a phyſician; he had ſuffered ſeverely by an intermittent fever in the Eaſt Indies, which had reſiſted the Peruvian bark there, and had been cured by arſenic. The patient himſelf wiſhed arſenic to be tried again, and ſuggeſted this to Mr John Bell, who propoſed it to me. I agreed to it moſt cheerfully, and preſcribed the arſenical ſolution accordingly, though the patient actually laboured under another diſeaſe, which many phyſicians would have thought, but which I did not think, ſufficient to forbid the uſe of the arſenic. He was cured by it perfectly, and without any ſenſible inconvenience, in four or five days, between the 7th and the 12th of December

ber 1802: he has felt no inconvenience or bad effects from it ſince; and ſo lately as the 24th of March 1803, I had the pleaſure of ſeeing him in at leaſt as good health as he enjoyed before that laſt attack of the intermittent fever, and that laſt uſe of the arſenic. I ſhould think it impoſſible to contrive a caſe better adapted to convince Mr John Bell, and all his clients, that the uſe of arſenic in ſome intermittent fevers, is neither a bold nor an unneceſſary experiment; and to ſatisfy the public, that when phyſicians do occaſionally employ ſuch a medicine as arſenic in a clinical or a common ward of an hoſpital, it is no more, and no worſe, than what they do, in private practice, to their beſt friends, or to themſelves, when the circumſtances of their diſeaſes ſeem to require it.

N° 14. *A diſtinct clinical hoſpital is a thing quite unknown, ſuch an undertaking never was attempted, &c.* In the proper ſenſe of the word clinical, as already explained, (page 379.), every charitable inſtitution for the relief and cure of the ſick poor, in which they are entertained and provided with beds, is a clinical hoſpital: a charitable inſtitution for the relief of the ſick poor which is not clinical, is called not an hoſpital, but a diſpenſary.

In the ſenſe of the word clinical in which it is uſed and explained by Mr John Bell, (16, 17.), *erected with the avowed deſign of receiving deſperate and forlorn caſes! of practiſing experiments! of teaching the profeſſion to young phyſicians! of proving the hypotheſes of medicine! and trying by experience the efficacy of drugs*—a clinical hoſpital is indeed a thing quite unknown, and I truſt ſhall ever continue ſo.

But an hoſpital erected with the avowed and ſole deſign of receiving *deſperate and forlorn caſes*, that is, in plain Engliſh, an hoſpital of *incurables*, would be a moſt charitable and uſeful inſtitution.

Such an hoſpital, to my certain knowledge, is much wanted in Edinburgh; and I preſume, without any minute enquiry, that it muſt

muſt be equally wanted in all great towns. I think it highly probable, that in proceſs of time ſuch an inſtitution will be eſtabliſhed here; and I mention with much pleaſure, in hopes that it may promote ſuch a plan, the benevolent and judicious bequeſt of a reſpectable old lady, Mrs MURRAY KEITH, lately deceaſed; who, anxious that her charities might not die with herſelf, by a letter addreſſed to me, bequeathed two thouſand pounds, for alleviating the diſtreſs of ſome of the moſt wretched of mankind, who being found incurable, (or, as ſhe expreſſed it, " after getting their ſen-" tence), are turned out of the Hoſpital to ſtarve, and for whom " there never has been any ſort of proviſion, though ſurely they " are the moſt miſerable of objects. Often has ſhe reflected on " this ſubject with grief, long before ſhe herſelf was amongſt " the number of incurables." This unhappily was her fate, by the moſt painful and incurable lameneſs, during the laſt fifteen years of her life. *Non ignara mali, miſeris ſuccurrere diſco*, evidently was the ſentiment which produced that benevolent bequeſt. Conſidering, very rightly, that any ſum which ſhe had to bequeath was too ſmall to build and endow a ſeparate hoſpital, ſhe directed the intereſt of the two thouſand pounds which ſhe bequeathed " to be beſtowed on the pooreſt and moſt helpleſs; but wiſhing, " where other claims were equal, the preference to be given to the " *lame*, who, by being confined within doors, are deprived of " free air and exerciſe, which, by raiſing the ſpirits, enable many " others, though as incurable, to bear their ſad fate with ſome " degree of reſolution," ſhe directed particularly, that none of the objects of her bounty " ſhould get above ten pounds yearly, " and not even ſo much, if not well recommended, and each per-" ſon to be informed, that the continuance of their allowance de-" pended entirely on their good behaviour, and be warned againſt " vice in general, but particularly againſt drinking, now become " ſo common amongſt both men and women, that few are entirely

" free

" free from it;" for which reaſon ſhe directed they ſhould be paid their allowance quarterly. She added, " It has juſt now oc-
" curred to her, that if any poor Negroes ſhould chance to be
" amongſt the incurables, not to let their colour be any objection,
" but rather caſt the balance in their favour, as they are friend-
" leſs, and without connections in this country, conſequently in
" greater danger of ſtarving than our own people."

This bequeſt, which was made about midſummer 1802, and became known by the death of Mrs Murray Keith in November laſt, is not the only one of the kind. Still more lately, another benevolent perſon, the late LADY RACHEL BRUCE, has bequeathed two hundred pounds for the ſame charitable purpoſe. I hope and truſt theſe good examples ſhall be followed by many others. But if this were done to ſuch an extent as to permit the building and endowing of a large hoſpital for the reception of ſuch deſperate and forlorn caſes, ſuch an hoſpital, for very obvious reaſons, ought to be ſeparate and diſtinct from this Infirmary: but whether diſtinct from it or connected with it, for example, by the Managers, in *direct violation* of the original plan, and of the charter of this Hoſpital, allotting certain wards of it for the reception of thoſe moſt miſerable objects, I am ſure that ſuch an hoſpital, or ſuch wards, would be moſt abſurdly unfit for the purpoſe of the Medical Profeſſors, and their clinical lectures.

For the honour of human nature in general, and of my own profeſſion in particular, I muſt believe that phyſicians will eaſily be found willing to give their profeſſional aſſiſtance for the relief of thoſe helpleſs and miſerable objects whom they can have no hopes of curing. But I do not believe that the Medical Profeſſors in this Univerſity, or any one of them, would ever be induced, either by motives of humanity or zeal for ſcience, to take the charge of thoſe wards for the ſake " of practiſing experiments, of teaching
" the profeſſion to young phyſicians, of proving the hypotheſes of
" medicine,

" medicine, of teaching not only the genuine practice, but the va-
" rious theories of medicine, and trying by experience the efficacy
" of drugs." I ſhould juſt as ſoon believe that a ſet of profeſſors and phyſicians ſhould be found, who would deliberately go away and hang themſelves, for the advancement of ſcience, and the good of mankind. At any rate, in either caſe, of ſuch clinical lectures, and ſuch hanging, I ſhould decline being of the party.

A moment's reflection muſt convince any perſon of the truth of what I have here ſtated, and the *impoſſibility* of the clinical lectures ever being what Mr John Bell and his clients have thought fit to repreſent them. Suppoſing, for the ſake of argument, that all of us who have ever engaged in clinical lectures, are as unprincipled, unfeeling, atrocious villains, as he and his friends wiſh to make us be thought, it cannot ſurely be ſuppoſed that we are alſo perfect idiots: it muſt rather be believed, in pure Chriſtian charity, that, like other phyſicians, we are true to our profit and our pride; both of which muſt be ſacrificed *for ever*, if we undertook the charge of ſuch patients and ſuch lectures. Every phyſician, however unfeeling or unprincipled he may be, muſt, even for his own ſake, wiſh to be ſucceſsful in his practice; for of all things this muſt tend moſt to procure him wealth and honour: and of all Phyſicians, thoſe who read clinical lectures on the caſes of their patients muſt be preſumed the moſt deſirous of being ſucceſsful; for, in addition to all other conſiderations of duty, honour, and intereſt, they have the very cogent reaſon of being obliged to give a minute account of all that they have done, of the reaſons of their practice, and the cauſes of its bad ſucceſs, when it proves unſucceſsful; every particular of which muſt be publicly known. The character of any Phyſicians who ſhould undertake the charge of ſuch clinical wards, and practiſe in them in the way that Mr John Bell has deſcribed, muſt ſoon be eſtabliſhed in a manner fatal to all their hopes of ſucceſs in their profeſſion; they, as well as their wards, would

ſoon

ſoon be objects of horror to the rich, as well as the poor: not only every patient admitted into their wards, but every patient who came under their care, would *think himſelf every way loſt, and thoſe who died would be thought to have ſuffered.*

In that ſenſe of the word *clinical*, in which it has generally been uſed in this medical ſchool, and I believe wherever our inſtitutions have been imitated, I mean as relating to practical lectures given by the Profeſſors on the caſes of the patients, a *clinical hoſpital* muſt always be a very rare inſtitution, for the plaineſt and beſt reaſons in the world. Such an hoſpital can very ſeldom be needed, becauſe a few ſmall wards in any common hoſpital muſt always be amply ſufficient for all the purpoſes of clinical lectures; and it is only in Univerſities in which there are great medical ſchools, or in great towns in which there are many young men breeding to phyſic and ſurgery, that ſuch lectures probably will be given. But I do not believe that, in this ſenſe of the word, a clinical hoſpital is a thing quite unknown; for, to the beſt of my information, ſuch a one was eſtabliſhed at Goettingen, originally and chiefly with a view to clinical lectures. But if every hoſpital in the world were made clinical, in that ſenſe, the patients in it, for reaſons fully explained already, (page 379. 84.), might be much the better, and could not be the worſe, for ſuch an innovation.

From what I have ſaid, it muſt be fully underſtood, that I do not mean that experiments, of the proper kind, are not to be tried in clinical wards, or clinical hoſpitals; but only that no other experiments are permitted to be tried in them, than ought to be tried in other wards, and other hoſpitals, and in private practice. I am ſure that no peculiar latitude in point of experiment ever was given by the Managers of this Hoſpital to the Clinical Profeſſors; and I never heard, nor do I believe, that any ſuch atrocious licence ever was given by the managers of any other hoſpital, to any phyſician or ſurgeon whom they permitted to read clinical lectures. Mr John Bell has ſaid very truly, (N° 19.), *that clinical wards were ap-*

pointed, and lectures on the cases of the patients were given in your Hospital, a thing unknown in London, or in other schools; but he has omitted to state that such lectures soon became known in London and in other schools. The example of this Hospital and this University has been followed in London, and in many other places; which seems to imply that the institution in question was generally and highly approved of.

He has also said, with some, but not equal truth, (No. 18.), *Your motives for allowing this dangerous innovation were pure and open. No busy searcher into the records of your Infirmary can prove on this occasion a pactum illicitum! a present of money! an actual reward for the perversion of the judgment! a logical or a real bribe! no, the University had nothing to give, and every thing to gain.* Certainly there was no bribe in the case; for an excellent and very obvious reason, that there was no occasion for a bribe to induce the Managers to do what they knew to be right. This it is usual for good men to do purely from a sense of duty, or from the persuasion that it may do good to others. It is only to induce men to do what they know to be wrong, as in the case of the bargain made by the Managers with the Corporation of Surgeons in 1738, that bribes are necessary. The establishment of clinical lectures was not a *dangerous* innovation, but just the contrary.

No. 15. *Though a laudable institution, a clinical hospital must be shrouded from the public eye.* No. 31. Having mentioned a clinical ward, he adds, *It is the part of the Hospital to which the most hopeless and desperate cases are conveyed; the stage for perpetual experiments; the scene upon which the public eye is fixed; the department of your institution where popular prejudices are most to be feared.* No. 20. *And books of experiments, under the undisguised name of clinical experiments, were published by the Professors of the University.*

So, that laudable institution, a clinical hospital, must be shrouded from the public view. But that equally laudable institution, the clinical wards in this Hospital, is the stage of perpetual experiments

ments, the ſcene upon which the public eye is fixed; and the experiments performed in them were publiſhed by the Profeſſors under the undiſguiſed name of clinical experiments. The inconſiſtency of the firſt with the ſecond and third of theſe aſſertions is complete and glaring: ſo they cannot all be true.

As to a clinical hoſpital, or a clinical ward in a common hoſpital, being ſhrouded from public view, ſuch an aſſertion needs no refutation, and hardly a contradiction. A clinical hoſpital or ward, in the ſenſe already explained as relating to lectures on the caſes of the patients, is preciſely that kind of hoſpital, or that part of a common one, which *cannot* be ſhrouded from public view; for it muſt be peculiarly expoſed to it, on account of the extraordinary number of ſtudents who frequent it, the attention which they give to the caſes of the patients, and the accurate journals which they keep of the progreſs of the caſes, and the reports and preſcriptions of the Phyſicians; which journals never were and never can be kept ſecret. Many hoſpitals, or particular wards of hoſpitals, may be concealed from public view, and for various reaſons, ought to be ſo; but with reſpect to clinical wards, this is neither deſirable nor poſſible.

I never underſtood that the clinical wards have the honour to be "*the ſcene on which the public eye is fixed.*" I ſuſpect rather that the public gives itſelf very little trouble about the clinical wards or the Clinical Profeſſors. The clinical wards are juſt as public as the common wards of the hoſpital, but not more ſo, except in as far as they are generally frequented by a greater number of ſtudents. The patients may leave thoſe wards, and often do ſo, when they pleaſe: their friends and relations have as eaſy acceſs to viſit them in the clinical as in any other wards of this Infirmary, and to invite them to go out, and to take them out, when they think fit. Of this liberty, it may well be believed that ſometimes a very improper uſe is made; ſome patients chooſing, and others being perſuaded by their friends, to go out, when they ſhould have ſtaid

in; that is, when they were but half cured, and had the faireſt proſpect of being completely cured, if they had perſevered in the uſe of the proper means; which proſpect was loſt by their going out of the hoſpital, and deſiſting from the uſe of the proper remedies. This, however, is but a partial evil, and the liberty in queſtion is, upon the whole, a great and general good. Indeed I firmly believe the benevolent purpoſe of the Royal Infirmary would be abſolutely fruſtrated, if patients were not allowed to leave it when they had a mind, or if their friends were not allowed to ſee them while they continued in it: for on ſuch terms few or none even of the moſt wretched would ſeek relief in ſuch an hoſpital.

The ſame conſiderations may be regarded as a complete refutation of what Mr John Bell has ſaid, (21.), that the profeſſors, " without the *invidious name of clinical hoſpital*, have a *ſafe* place " where they can *make experiments* as *dangerous*, &c. as they pleaſe." If the name of *clinical hoſpital* be invidious, which it ought not to be, the name of *clinical wards* muſt be at leaſt equally invidious, if not more ſo; on account of the contraſt between them and the common wards, and the daily opportunities that the patients would have of comparing their own ſituation, and the manner in which they are treated, in the different wards of the ſame hoſpital. This conſideration alone, to the beſt of my judgment, muſt render *impoſſible* that pretended peculiar and horrible deſtination and uſe of the clinical wards, which Mr John Bell has kindly taken ſo much pains to explain. (21.) *They have a ſafe place where they can make experiments as dangerous, &c. as they pleaſe. Safe* here muſt relate to the Profeſſors and Phyſicians; *dangerous*, to the unhappy patients who are the ſubjects at leaſt, if not the victims of ſuch experiments. The ſafety in queſtion can mean nothing but ſafety to the fortune and fame of the Phyſicians, perhaps alſo to their necks, if they were ſuch fools and knaves as to attempt to make ſuch experiments on the poor patients entruſted to their care. There can be no doubt,

doubt, that making ſuch dangerous experiments, without regard to any other conſideration but the general intereſts of ſcience, would be a very high miſdemeanour, and ſeverely puniſhable; and if ſome of the patients died under thoſe experiments, which muſt be ſuppoſed to happen, and indeed is implied in the very notion of dangerous experiments, it would become a very nice queſtion, and one which I am not Lawyer enough to decide, how near the conduct of the Phyſician approached to wilful murder. It certainly would be at leaſt what is called manſlaughter in England, and culpable homicide in Scotland: and though the practitioner might eſcape hanging for the firſt homicide of the kind, I do not know what might happen if he ſhould perſevere in the ſame conduct; but I ſhould ſuſpect that the inſurance of his neck would be reckoned much more than doubly hazardous.

In the mean time, let it be obſerved, that Mr John Bell and his clients have beſtowed the moſt extravagant encomiums on the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, on pretence of their having granted a permiſſion to the Clinical Profeſſors to do, in certain wards of this Hoſpital, ſuch things as no perſon of common ſenſe and humanity can think of without horror; ſuch things as would be criminal in the eye of the law; ſuch things as it is implied even in that pretended permiſſion, the ordinary Phyſicians of the Hoſpital were not allowed to do in the common wards; and ſuch things as no Phyſicians are allowed to do in their ordinary private practice. The Clinical Profeſſors ſurely could need no permiſſion from the Managers, and the Managers could never have thought of giving them, either expreſsly or by implication, a permiſſion to make ſuch experiments, whether dangerous or not, as it was their right and their duty to do in the ordinary exerciſe of their profeſſion: and ſuch a peculiar permiſſion or privilege to make dangerous experiments, no Phyſician could or would accept, and no ſet of managers of any hoſpital could give, or durſt offer, to any phyſician.

But

But let us conſider *a ſafe place for making dangerous experiments* on patients, as relating only to the ſafety of the Phyſicians fame and fortune; implying that the danger and the bad effects, eſpecially the fatal conſequences of ſuch experiments, are to be ſtrictly concealed. Even in this limited ſenſe of the expreſſion *a ſafe place*, I cannot ſuppoſe that Mr John Bell and his clients ſhould even for a moment have believed that the clinical wards of this Hoſpital are ſuch a place. They are frequented by a great number of ſtudents, generally from 100 to 150, or more. Every preſcription of the Phyſician, and every effect of it, and every change which occurs in the patient after it, may be known directly to all thoſe ſtudents, and in fact is known to moſt of them, and indirectly but very ſpeedily may be known to all their acquaintance, to every medical ſtudent at the Univerſity, and to many hundreds or thouſands of the inhabitants of this city. Any extraordinary, and eſpecially any dangerous experiment, certainly would be thus generally known, and would become a ſubject of very general animadverſion. If the reſult of the experiment were unfavourable, above all if it were fatal, it would become a ſubject of the ſevereſt cenſure among men of ſenſe, and very probably of popular indignation and clamour. Moreover, every preſcription of a Clinical Profeſſor ſtands on record in the clinical books kept by the clerks, and in the book of the apothecary who makes up the medicines: further, every ſtudent attending the clinical lectures has acceſs to the clinical books, and may tranſcribe from them whatever he pleaſes; and in fact by far the greater number of the ſtudents, either avail themſelves of this privilege, or by taking down directly from the Profeſſor's mouth his reports and preſcriptions at the time of the public viſits, have complete and regular journals of every preſcription and ſymptom, from the hour that the patient entered the ward till he was diſmiſſed from it. The more intereſting of theſe caſes are often minutely known to many other ſtudents, who even

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take the trouble to tranſcribe for their own uſe the whole journals of them. Laſtly, to my certain knowledge, ſeveral of theſe journals, I mean eſpecially of unfortunate caſes, have been printed and publiſhed, adorned and illuſtrated by very ample and inveterate commentaries, in which the editors have been pleaſed to revile the Profeſſors in the bittereſt terms of contempt and reproach. I myſelf have had the honour of being thus reviled in print for my practice in the clinical wards; and I know that ſome of my colleagues have fared almoſt as ill as I have done. I dare not venture to give any ſpecimens of this kind of abuſe, becauſe I am ſure they would not be believed, unleſs I were to quote the particular publications in which they appeared, and to give the names of the authors of them. This I will not do, as it might be ruinous to ſome men, who I truſt have lived long enough to become ſenſible both of the folly and the turpitude of their conduct: but if any gentleman wiſhes to ſee a ſpecimen of thoſe publications, I can eaſily gratify him, and convince him of the truth of what I have here ſtated. But in the mean time any perſon may form a pretty juſt notion of the candour and ſpirit of thoſe publications, and their authors, when I mention, that, to the beſt of my knowledge and belief, all of them were written by young men, whom, on examination, the Profeſſors had found groſsly ignorant, and had remitted to their ſtudies, and who endeavoured, by ſuch publications, at once to eſtabliſh their own character for talents and knowledge, and to take ſevere vengeance on the Profeſſors.

But the moſt minute criticiſm and rigorous animadverſion on the conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors are not confined to thoſe ſtudents, who, from being remitted to their ſtudies when examined, or from other cauſes, are irritated againſt the Profeſſors, and therefore eager to repreſent in the moſt unfavourable manner every thing that they ſay or do. Many of the ſtudents attending the clinical lectures, by very ample preliminary education, and even

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by having ſeen much practice, either in private, or in the army or navy, or in other hoſpitals, are really well qualified to judge both of the practice and the lectures of the Clinical Profeſſors: many more of the ſtudents think themſelves well qualified to do ſo; and are not the leſs ſevere and dogmatical in their cenſures, becauſe their qualifications to judge of what they ſee and hear are very ſlender, or perhaps imaginary: many of the ſtudents, tho' deficient neither in talents nor in knowledge, and not abounding in vanity, and not wiſhing to act uncandidly, yet come to attend the clinical lectures, with ſtrong prejudices in favour of opinions and practices widely different from thoſe which the Profeſſors adopt. It muſt appear to thoſe unacquainted with the ſubject an extravagant and almoſt unintelligible paradox to ſay, that even great and uniform ſucceſs on the part of the Profeſſor cannot always get the better of ſuch prejudices for or againſt certain practices and opinions. Yet this paradox is a ſerious truth. To explain what I mean by it, I muſt give a particular inſtance, which is too recent and too ſerious to be forgotten by thoſe who had the beſt means of knowing the particulars of it. In ſummer 1801, (as already mentioned, page 347), during the hotteſt weather, it happened unfortunately that I got into the clinical wards ſome patients very ill of the common contagious fever; ſome of them indeed ſo long ill, and ſo very ill, that I had ſcarce any hopes of ſaving them. Far beyond my expectations, every one of them recovered; chiefly, as I think, by the uniform and vigorous uſe of the *very cool* regimen, including not only great cleanlineſs, but the moſt thorough ventilation, and the frequent *waſhing of their bodies with cold water.* No fewer than eight of my ſtudents caught the fever; chiefly, as I believe, by their own obſtinacy in diſregarding my admonitions, and not believing that the fever was contagious. Two of the eight died. One of theſe was my own patient, from the evening of the fourth, till the morning of the 23d day of his fever, when he died, the circumſtances

cumſtances of it being ſuch as to baffle all my ſkill, and Dr Duncan's, during that time. The other of the two, notwithſtanding the ſucceſs which he had ſeen attending it, held my practice, and eſpecially the cold regimen, in ſuch deteſtation, that when he was taken ill of the fever, he would not allow me to be called in to ſee him, and of courſe took the very oppoſite method to that which he had ſeen me follow, keeping himſelf as warm as he could; till the morning of the fifth day, when he was found dead. I knew nothing of his illneſs, till one of his companions, with great horror, informed me of his death, and of the circumſtances which ſeemed to have haſtened it. This was indeed an extreme caſe; but nothing can better illuſtrate the unbounded freedom with which our ſtudents think for themſelves, and judge of the opinions and practices of their Profeſſors.

It is needleſs to point out how ſuch young men would think and ſpeak of the practice of a Phyſician, which conſiſted of trials of dangerous remedies, and of courſe was leſs ſucceſsful: Yet a precarious ſucceſs, with many failures, is all that the beſt of us can pretend to in moſt diſeaſes.

On the whole, far from believing that the clinical wards in this Hoſpital are a ſafe place for the Profeſſors to perform dangerous experiments, I firmly believe they are, for that purpoſe, the moſt dangerous place on the face of the earth. Moreover, I muſt beg leave to ſtate a kind of paradox, but which may eaſily be explained and eſtabliſhed as an important truth, I mean, that there neither is, nor *can be*, in any hoſpital, or in any private houſe, a ſafe place for a phyſician, ſtrictly and properly ſo called, to try dangerous experiments. By a phyſician, in this ſtrict ſenſe, I mean one who does not himſelf diſpenſe or furniſh medicines to his patients, but only gives his advice and preſcriptions, or *Recipes* as they are called. All theſe preſcriptions ought to remain, and generally do remain, on the apothecary's file, and even tranſcribed into his book; always ready to riſe in judgment againſt the phyſician the very firſt opportunity.

But any very extraordinary or dangerous preſcription of a phyſician will certainly be preſerved, and the effects of it will be marked with the moſt anxious care, and recorded never to be forgotten; for this good reaſon, that every apothecary, whether wiſe or fooliſh, muſt be ſuppoſed to know, that it is quite enough for him to have to anſwer for his own blunders and negligence, and for thoſe of the people whom he employs in his ſhop: and would certainly think his throat cut, if he were made in any degree anſwerable for the dangerous experiments tried by a phyſician: which infallibly would be the caſe, if he could not produce the phyſician's preſcription. Further, ſome apothecaries, for various reaſons good or bad, wiſh ſome phyſicians at the devil, and take every opportunity to do them every ill office in their power. Such apothecaries would certainly loſe no time in making generally known the ſuppoſed dangerous preſcriptions, and their real or ſuppoſed bad effects. Many apothecaries are very intelligent, honeſt, benevolent men; and as they know perfectly what medicines, and what doſes of them, are dangerous, if they got any dangerous preſcriptions to make up, would naturally ſuſpect ſome miſtake, and would immediately apply to the phyſician, or, if neceſſary, to the patient or his friends, to have the miſtake explained and rectified; which would ſoon cut ſhort the dangerous experiment. Some years ago I got from my own apothecary a leſſon on this point, which gratified me very much. Having occaſion to direct a *very ſtrong* medicine for a patient, a maniac, and not chooſing that his name ſhould appear on the paper, or even that any ſervant of the family ſhould go with it to an apothecary's, leſt the gentleman's unfortunate ſituation ſhould become known, I went myſelf, and put my preſcription, fairly written, into the hands of my own apothecary. He peruſed it repeatedly, with much gravity and attention, to my great edification; and at laſt began to expreſs his fears with reſpect to the operation of ſo

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ſtrong a medicine; but on my telling him there was a particular reaſon for it, and that many gentler medicines had been tried in vain with the patient for whom it was intended, he proceeded to make up the medicine faithfully, *ſecundum artem:* and in the courſe of a few weeks had occaſion to make it up more than once for the uſe of the ſame patient, whoſe diſeaſe, I believe, though not his name, he ſoon diſcovered. From that little ſpecimen I could eaſily judge what would be the fate of any preſcription for a violent or dangerous remedy, that came to the ſhop of an intelligent and honeſt apothecary; and could even gueſs what would probably be the fate of the phyſician who ſhould venture to give ſuch preſcriptions. I preſume it is generally underſtood, that the profeſſional knowledge and duty of an apothecary, with reſpect to caution as well as fidelity, in making up of medicines, affords an additional ſecurity to patients who truſt their health and lives to phyſicians, who give their preſcriptions only, without furniſhing medicines. But I know of no ſecurity, nor can I conceive any, to thoſe patients who truſt themſelves to the ſkill, and care, and fidelity, of practitioners, who furniſh medicines to the patients that employ them, and who have diſcovered, that the principles of moral conduct, even with reſpect to thoſe whoſe health and life are at ſtake, are different in phyſic from what they are in ſurgery; and who declare publicly and in print, that they unequivocally approve, in the practice of the medical profeſſion, a latitude which they dare not admit in ſurgery, and who fairly tell us, that in the practice of phyſic, the making profeſſed trial of every practice is not good for the ſick, but that, on the preſumption of general good, in this inſtance experiments are allowed which muſt be a partial evil: that is, muſt be hurtful or fatal to many of thoſe on whom they are tried.

It is eaſy to ſee why Mr John Bell and his clients were at pains to ſtate that flimſy and nugatory diſtinction, between the practice of phyſic and that of ſurgery, with reſpect to trying experiments

on patients. Their object plainly was to repreſent the practice of phyſic, eſpecially in the clinical wards of this Infirmary, as a ſeries of the moſt wanton and dangerous experiments, and to make the clinical wards, and the Profeſſors who practiſed in them, and the Managers of the Infirmary who permitted Clinical Lectures in this Hoſpital, objects of general indignation and horror; but by no means to repreſent the Surgeons, or their wards, in the ſame unfavourable light; and on the contrary, to ſtate a diſtinction, or pretended diſtinction, between ſurgery and phyſic, with reſpect to that important point which they repreſented ſo unfavourably as to phyſic. In this moſt laudable attempt they had unluckily forgotten, that the ſurgeon-apothecaries of Edinburgh practiſe ten or twenty times more as phyſicians than they do as ſurgeons. It is therefore highly neceſſary for their own ſake, and ſtill more for that of their patients, that they ſhould retract and diſavow that horrible ſentiment, with reſpect to the latitude of trying experiments in phyſic, which they do not admit in ſurgery; for, as long as they do hold that deteſtable principle, their patients, who expect from them not chirurgical but medical aſſiſtance, can have no ſecurity that they will not every day be made the ſubjects, and at laſt become the victims, of unneceſſary, long-continued, expenſive, and dangerous experiments. Every houſe, every bedchamber in Edinburgh, is in this reſpect a clinical ward to a ſurgeon-apothecary who holds that principle. It is, to uſe their own words, (21), *a ſafe place where they can make experiments as dangerous, as expenſive, as long-continued as they pleaſe!* They may be as long-continued and as expenſive as they pleaſe; nay, it is their intereſt to make them ſo, becauſe they are paid both for their attendance and their medicines. It is a ſafe place; for the experiments they try, and even the medicines they give, which either by themſelves or others whom they employ, they prepare, and make up, and adminiſter, can never be known,

known, unleſs they pleaſe. As little can their unfavourable or fatal effects be known; becauſe theſe cannot be diſtinguiſhed from the ſymptoms belonging to the diſeaſe, or the poſſible effects of common and ſafe medicines: Nay, when any experiment is likely to end fatally, all danger, that is, all danger to the practitioner who made the experiment, is effectually prevented, by the eaſy expedient of calling in a phyſician; whoſe preſence, on ſuch occaſions, even though his preſcriptions can do no good, never fails to *give great ſatisfaction, and to prevent reflections*, as we are frequently told when we are called in to patiénts who are juſt dying.

(20.) *Books of experiments, under the undiſguiſed name of* CLINICAL EXPERIMENTS, *were publiſhed by the Profeſſors of the Univerſity.* There is peculiar merit and delicacy in this happy alluſion, which can relate to no book but one; and that one a volume publiſhed more than twenty years ago by DR FRANCIS HOME, *Emeritus* Profeſſor of Phyſic and *Materia Medica* in this Univerſity, and who is at preſent, and has been for many years, one of the Ordinary Managers of this Infirmary. If Dr Home had done me the honour to aſk my advice or opinion about the title of his work, I ſhould certainly have endeavoured to diſſuade him from giving it the one which it bears, *Clinical Experiments, Hiſtories, and Diſſections.* I could at leaſt have pointed out to him, that ſuch a title might eaſily be miſunderſtood, and ſtill more eaſily miſrepreſented. I could have convinced him, that ſuch a ſimple title as Clinical Hiſtories, or Clinical Caſes, or Clinical Obſervations, would have fully conveyed his meaning; and that there was no occaſion, in the whole courſe of his book, to uſe the word Experiment, even once.

The fact, that his book was publiſhed with ſuch a title, and that almoſt every piece of practice mentioned in it is called an experiment, muſt give to every man of ſenſe and candour a very

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ſtrong preſumption, that thoſe experiments were at leaſt very innocent: that there was nothing in them of which the Author had reaſon to be aſhamed, or others afraid; nothing that could make either him or the clinical wards objects of jealouſy to the rich, and of horror to the poor.

But this preſumption *muſt* inſtantly have been converted into certainty in every perſon who peruſed the book, or even who read the table of its contents: from which it appears, that thoſe experiments are in general the common practice of phyſic: the moſt common and approved remedies, employed in thoſe diſeaſes, and in that manner, in which they have been moſt generally uſed, and are moſt ſtrongly recommended. To the beſt of my judgment, at leaſt nine out of ten of the medicines, whoſe effects he has recorded, are of this kind: and of the few medicines not in common uſe, and not even generally known in this country, which he employed, I do not believe there was one in any degree dangerous. Theſe things are ſo notorious and undeniable, that they ſoon put an end to the illiberal and malevolent obſervations which Dr Home's book, or rather the title of it, produced, when it was firſt publiſhed.

To give here an abridgment or abſtract of his whole book, a large octavo volume, would be tedious and unneceſſary: but in proof and illuſtration of what I have ſaid, I ſhall give a few ſpecimens of it.

The firſt ſection of it is entitled, "Experiments with regard to "the moſt proper time of giving the bark in intermittents." It had long been known, though for more than a century it had been keenly diſputed, that the Peruvian bark was a very ſafe medicine, and in general an eaſy, ſpeedy, and almoſt certain cure for intermittent fevers: but phyſicians, as became them, continued, and ſtill continue, to diſpute, whether its good effects were obtained moſt quickly and ſurely by giving a few, perhaps two or three,

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large doſes of it, as near as poſſible to the time when the fit was expected; or by giving many ſmaller doſes of it, beginning as ſoon as poſſible after the fit was over. There were ſtrong teſtimonials, from real or pretended experience, in favour of each of thoſe modes of practice, and againſt the other. Nor was it even allowed to remain purely a queſtion of fact, to be decided by frequent and careful experience, and impartial teſtimony. It was blended and confounded, to the great puzzling of many ſtudents, and of ſome practitioners, with various medical theories and reaſonings, about the cauſes of intermittent fevers, and the mode of operation of the bark, on the fluids, or on the ſolids, on the nerves, or on the ſtomach.

Dr Cullen, who, at the time to which I allude, when Dr Home was making and publiſhing thoſe experiments, was Profeſſor of the Practice of Phyſic in this Univerſity, declared ſtrongly in favour of giving the bark as near as poſſible to the time of the expected fit, (Firſt Lines, 232. 4.) This practice coincided beſt with his theory both of the diſeaſe, and of the mode of operation of the remedy. He had alſo got ſome well-atteſted caſes, in which it appeared, that one or two large doſes, ſuch as a quarter of an ounce, or even half an ounce, of the bark, taken within an hour of the time when the fit was expected, had completly cured the diſeaſe, after it had continued for a long time, and had reſiſted many ſmaller doſes of the bark taken during the whole of the interval between the fits.

On the other hand, many practitioners declared, that when the bark was given in large doſes juſt before the fit was expected, it often did no good, and ſometimes was thrown up by vomiting, ſo quickly, that it had ſcarce a chance of doing good: nay, ſome went ſo far as to ſay, that they had known the bark, when given in that manner, and well retained on the ſtomach, do harm inſtead of good, and make the ſubſequent fit more ſevere than any

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of the preceding had been. It was alſo well known, or at leaſt verified by ſo many examples as hardly to admit of diſpute, that in whatever way the bark was adminiſtered, it did not, in general, cure or ſtop the intermittent at once, ſo as to prevent the return of even one other fit, and that often two, three, or four other fits took place, though the bark was adminiſtered faithfully during the intervals; but that theſe fits became gradually ſlighter, and leſs perfect, and at laſt ceaſed altogether. This common obſervation ſtrongly implied that ſome part at leaſt, if not the whole, of the good effects of the bark, depended upon its ſlow operation in the body, rather than on its immediate effect on the ſtomach.

Dr Home, naturally thinking that this was a queſtion of ſome importance, not only with a view to economy in diſpenſing the bark, but with a view to the eaſe, and comfort, and ſpeedy recovery of patients labouring under intermittent fevers, and being unable to decide among ſuch inconſiſtent teſtimonies and reaſonings, very innocently at leaſt, if not laudably, reſolved to adminiſter the bark to ſome patients in the one way, to ſome in the other, and carefully to obſerve the reſult. The number of theſe experiments, or of the patients on whom they were tried, was fourteen: and the reſult was ſtrongly in favour of giving it as ſoon as poſſible after the fit, and againſt giving it within two or three hours of the time when the fit is expected. In eight of the caſes, when given juſt before the fit was expected, it did not prevent the fit; in five caſes, when given juſt after the fit, it prevented the acceſſion of another. Whether Mr John Bell and his clients acquieſce in this concluſion or not, they muſt at leaſt acknowledge, that there was nothing dangerous or horrible in the experiment.

The ſecond ſection of Dr Home's book contains an account of his practice in the common continued fever; and the remedies which

which he uſed in it were almoſt all of them the common and moſt approved remedies employed by Phyſicians in that diſeaſe; ſuch as the Peruvian bark, bliſters, fomentation of the legs, camphor, tartar emetic, James's powder, and opiates. Two remedies were employed by him, in a few caſes, which were not in common uſe in this country; the firſt of theſe was the tincture of cantharides, in ſmall doſes, only twenty drops, twice or thrice a-day. This uſe of the medicine had been ſtrongly recommended, many years before, by Dr Hillary, an eminent Phyſician, who practiſed in the Weſt Indies, and who is well known by his book on the diſeaſes of Barbadoes. The ſame medicine, cantharides, had been in great repute, and general uſe, in the cure of ſuch fevers, for more than a hundred years, but applied in a different manner; externally, in the form of bliſtering plaſters. Many Phyſicians, however, had thought that the good effects, real or ſuppoſed, of ſuch plaſters, depended not upon their local operation on the ſkin, but on ſome portion of the cantharides abſorbed, and taken into the blood, and conveyed all over the body. In moſt of the caſes in which Dr Home gave it internally, it appeared evidently to do good; and in none of them did it any harm: all the patients recovered ſoon and eaſily.

The other uncommon medicine which Dr Home tried in the cure of continued fever, was the *Petaſites*, or Butter-bur, which had long ago been in ſome eſtimation, and had afterwards fallen, I believe very deſervedly, into neglect and contempt. But it had been again brought into uſe in Ruſſia, and extolled as very ſucceſsful in the cure of a malignant fever which prevailed in that country. Dr Home gave it to *one* patient in a fever, for three or four days. The fever diminiſhed during its uſe; but it did not appear that the medicine itſelf had any ſenſible effect; and there is reaſon to believe, that though a very innocent, it is a very inſignificant drug.

Perhaps it will be thought that I have ſelected the firſt two ſections of Dr Home's book, as being leſs exceptionable than the reſt of it: but any perſon who ſhall take the trouble to peruſe the whole volume, will be fully convinced that it is all of the ſame kind with the ſample which I have given of it. Nay, to cut ſhort all ſuch ſurmiſes, I ſhall mention here, without ſcruple, and without fear of giving offence to my venerable preceptor and colleague, the only two pieces of practice or experiments of his, that ever I heard of as being made the ſubject of reprehenſion. The firſt of theſe was the uſe of vipers (their fleſh, and the broth made of it) internally, as a cure for certain inveterate diſeaſes of the ſkin, which by ſome Phyſicians are called Herpes, by others Leproſy. Vipers had been employed in ſuch diſeaſes, and in many others, and highly extolled, by ſome of the greateſt of the ancient Phyſicians, and by many of the moderns. Yet though they ſtill kept their place in our diſpenſatories, and were really to be had at Apothecaries Hall in London, and in many apothecaries ſhops, they were very little uſed in practice. This ſtrongly implied that they had not in reality been found very uſeful: beſides, there was reaſon to ſuſpect that they had originally been introduced into practice in conſequence of ſome ſuperſtitious notions which were common to the Greeks and Romans; whether borrowed by them from the Jews, and their brazen ſerpent, or not, I am not antiquarian enough to determine. Still, however, it was poſſible that a remedy might be good, though originally introduced by ſuperſtition; and that a good remedy might have fallen into unmerited neglect. It was at leaſt certain, by very ample experience, that the fleſh of vipers, and the broth made of it, was a perfectly innocent and wholeſome food, juſt like the fleſh of eels, or that of tortoiſes, commonly called turtles. It had often been uſed as an article of diet, and conſidered as a very powerful reſtorative. Dr Home thought it worth while to try that mild and ſafe remedy, for the cure of an obſtinate diſeaſe, which

which generally requires, and ſometimes baffles, our moſt powerful, and what may be called our rougheſt medicines. He gave vipers to three patients, one of whom grew better under their uſe, but was not cured; ſeemingly becauſe no more vipers could be got for him. The ſecond in about a fortnight was almoſt cured; but being informed by ſome fooliſh perſon what ſhe was getting, would take no more of the medicine. The third of thoſe patients, a girl of fifteen, who had been covered from her infancy with a dry ſcaly eruption, was cured in a fortnight.

I am far from contending, that a few ſuch caſes are ſufficient to entitle vipers to reſume their former honourable ſtation in our diſpenſatories, from which they have moſt ignominiouſly been diſmiſſed within theſe few years, both by the London and the Edinburgh Colleges of Phyſicians: but I contend ſtrongly for the following propoſitions; that the vipers did no harm in the caſes in which they were given; that every practitioner of competent knowledge muſt have been ſure of this beforehand; and that the prejudices of the people in this country againſt ſuch an article of food or medicine, are groundleſs and abſurd; juſt like the horror which the Spaniards of South America, ſo lately as the time of Commodore Anſon, entertained againſt eating turtle. Moreover, though I ſhould not truſt to vipers for the cure of herpes or leproſy, I think it highly probable that ſome diſeaſes of the ſkin may be cured by them. For example, if a poor ſailor, by living on the common but unwholſome ſeafaring diet, had grown ſcorbutic and ſcaly, I dare ſay the fleſh and the broth of vipers, provided only he could get enough of it, would contribute greatly to his cure: and if a rich Alderman was grown mangy by over feeding, I dare ſay he might be cured by living for two or three months on viper broth and bread, as certainly as by living for the ſame time on chicken broth, or any other wholeſome low diet: and I have no doubt, that if all the Counts and Princes of the holy Roman

Empire, a hundred years ago, had got the mange, vipers would have been preſcribed for them all. Yet that ſimple and innocent piece of practice, merely becauſe it was uncommon in this country, was moſt abſurdly and unjuſtly made a ſubject of reproach to Dr Home.

The other piece of practice or experiment, which by ſome perſons, who ought to have known better, was ſpoken of in terms of reproach, to me always appeared in a very different light. I allude to his experiments with reſpect to the uſe of bliſters as a cure for continued fevers. For this purpoſe they had long been in general uſe; for it happened that Phyſicians of very different ſects or ſyſtems in phyſic had yet agreed, though for different reaſons, in uſing bliſters in continued fevers. I myſelf know of three totally different theories, all of which I believe to be erroneous, that made Phyſicians think it neceſſary to uſe them; I mean that of evacuating morbid matter, that of reſolving viſcid lentor of the blood, and that of relaxing or of taking off ſpaſm from the extreme veſſels on the ſurface of the body: and I believe there have been ſome other theories, or at leaſt ſome peculiar modifications of theſe, all favouring the ſame kind of practice; yet many Phyſicians, between twenty and forty years ago, had begun to diſtruſt it. The practice, however, was ſo firmly eſtabliſhed, that however much we diſtruſted it, few if any of us dared to omit it in urgent caſes. Dr Home, like many other Phyſicians about that time, diſtruſted the ſuppoſed goods effects of bliſters in fevers; but uſed them, in compliance with cuſtom and ſyſtem. He carefully obſerved their effects, and very candidly publiſhed the reſult of his obſervations. This reſult was very unfavourable: in ſeven experiments, that is, of ſeven patients labouring under continued fever, whoſe cure was truſted chiefly to bliſters, four died, one grew worſe under their uſe, and the other two were evidently no better for them. If this had been a trial of a new remedy, I ſhould have thought it highly

blameable:

blameable: but it was juſt the reverſe; it was the faithful employment of a common long-eſtabliſhed practice, one ſo firmly eſtabliſhed, that if it had been omitted in thoſe caſes which ended fatally, this would have been conſidered as a bold or wanton experiment: nay, it would have been ſuppoſed, that the patients died for want of bliſtering. Dr Home had no peculiar merit or demerit in the practice which he followed; but very great merit in candidly making known its bad ſucceſs. If other Phyſicians had been as candid in giving an account of their bad ſucceſs with different remedies, or but half as ready to publiſh their unſucceſsful as their ſucceſsful caſes, whatever medicines they employed, it would have been well for their ſcience, and better for mankind.

Any perſon who is curious or diſtruſtful, may ſoon be convinced that theſe are my genuine ſentiments on the ſubject, and not aſſumed or profeſſed to ſerve a particular purpoſe on the preſent occaſion. In my *Conſpectus Medicinæ Theoreticæ*, publiſhed near twenty years ago, after mentioning pretty fully the practice of bliſtering in continued fevers, and the various theories or reaſons aſſigned for it, and my own diſtruſt, both of the practice and the theories in queſtion, I alluded to Dr Home's experiments on the ſubject in the following words, Parag. 1615. *Neque hic ſilentio præterire fas eſt experimenta clari auctoris, infelicia quidem illa, ſed non eo minus utilia, quæque ipſe honesto et liberali animo palam indicavit. Hic auctor in experimenta de febrium remediis incumbens, ægros aliquot, posthabitis plerisque aliis auxiliis, veſicatoriis fere ſolis commiſit; febricitantium vero hoc modo tractatorum major pars periit; eorumque qui evaserant, nemo multum boni ab illo remedio percepit, plerique haud parum mali.*

To thoſe who are not of the medical profeſſion it may be neceſſary, but it will be eaſy, to explain the great importance of that candid publication of Dr Home, in which he acknowledged the bad ſucceſs that he had met with from the uſe of bliſters in the cure of continued fevers. Probably there were at that time, in this

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iſland alone, many hundreds of practitioners in the conſtant habit of employing bliſters in the cure of that diſeaſe, *bona fide* believing that they were one of the beſt remedies that could be uſed, and of ſuch importance, that they themſelves would have been highly culpable if they had not employed them. Many of thoſe practitioners might have occaſion to treat every year, twenty, fifty, or a hundred patients ill of fevers, and probably many hundreds of ſuch patients in the courſe of their lives; all of whom muſt by that practice have been made to ſuffer much pain and inconvenience, without any adequate benefit, or without any benefit at all; and ſeveral of them every year muſt have periſhed by having their cure truſted to that unavailing and often pernicious remedy, implying the omiſſion or neglect of other remedies, which might either have cured them ſpeedily, or, by alleviating their ſufferings, and breaking the force of the fever, might, in the courſe of a few days, have brought it to a favourable termination. Many of the beſt practitioners, with whom I have had an opportunity of converſing on this ſubject, agree with me, and with Dr Home, in rejecting bliſters as a general cure for continued fevers; though we admit that they are a valuable remedy in ſome other diſeaſes, even of the febrile kind; nay, that they may ſometimes relieve certain ſymptoms which occaſionally take place in continued fevers: but for this purpoſe I believe we have other remedies far preferable to bliſters. To the beſt of my knowledge and belief, not the thirtieth part of the number of bliſters is at this time employed in the cure of continued fevers that was employed in the cure of them thirty years ago; and I am convinced, that this eſſential improvement in that important ſubject of practice has been in a great meaſure owing to Dr Home's publication. Yet ſo tenacious are Phyſicians of their old opinions and practices, that ſeveral of them, to my knowledge, would never ſubmit to be ſet right on that point; and continued to preſcribe bliſters for the cure of continued fevers as long as they lived.

lived. Nay, I ſhrewdly ſuſpect that there are, even in this country, ſome Phyſicians who faithfully adhere to the old ſyſtem; chiefly, I believe, ſome of the older members of our faculty, and very few, if any, under the age of fifty. Such good orthodox adherents of the old ſchool will of courſe regard all that I have here ſaid of bliſters as a moſt damnable hereſy; and when I declare, as I can do with truth, that I have treated ſucceſsfully many hundreds of patients ill of continued fevers without the help of one bliſter, they will no more believe me, than I ſhould believe them, if they were to tell me, that they had cured five hundred ſuch patients by bliſters alone, without the help of any other remedy.

Such was the nature, and ſuch one of the effects, of that book, the title of which appeared ſo formidable, and to which Mr John Bell alludes, with ſuch confidence, in proof of the horrible nature and purpoſe of clinical lectures.

How then, it may reaſonably be aſked, can the particulars of ſuch innocent and common practice be called experiments; or what propriety or what joke was there in giving to the book in queſtion the title of clinical experiments? Even this may eaſily be explained; and I think it worth while to do ſo. In the firſt place, in every part of Natural Philoſophy, every change produced by human contrivance is called an experiment; which means no more than a contrived obſervation. An obſervation, as diſtinguiſhed from an experiment, is the remarking any event or change which occurred from natural cauſes, and without any human contrivance. We have obſervations on eclipſes, on the tides, on earthquakes, on eruptions of volcanos, and on the ſymptoms of diſeaſes: We have experiments in mechanical philoſophy, with balls of ivory or of clay, with magnets, and priſms, and electrical machines; in chemiſtry, with acids and alcalis, metals and gaſes, heat and cold; and in phyſic, with medicines and regimen. It would be well for mankind, and beſt of all for our moſt noble faculty, if our experiments

ments in phyſic were as certain and uniform as thoſe in chemiſtry, or in mechanical philoſophy: but as long as the human body is a living ſubject, implying the exiſtence and co-operation of another principle of change, infinitely variable in its condition, and at leaſt as important in its influence as the medicines which we preſcribe, that kind of certainty cannot be attained. Our practice is therefore neceſſarily not only a ſyſtem of experiments, but a conſtant ſeries of precarious experiments; ſome of which approach near to certainty, but others are far removed from it. The nearer they are brought to certainty the better for the patients, and for the practitioners, the teachers, and the learners of medicine. But if they were all brought to perfect certainty, they would equally be experiments, in the philoſophical ſenſe already explained; and ſuch experiments as every ſtudent ought to ſee, and attend to, in all their circumſtances; juſt as the ſtudents of chemiſtry and natural philoſophy ſee the experiments, even the moſt familiar and certain, in thoſe branches of ſcience. A ſtudent of phyſic would ſoon acquire more uſeful knowledge by a courſe of ſuch experiments, than could be extracted from ſome thouſands of our moſt learned volumes; as a ſtudent of natural philoſophy, who is not an incorrigible blockhead, will learn more of the laws of nature, with reſpect to matter and motion, from ſeeing experiments made with two balls of ivory, or two maſſes of ſoft clay, than could be diſtilled from all the writings of Ariſtotle, and of all the philoſophers that ſucceeded him till the time of Galileo.

But further, medicine, from the very nature of the ſubject on which it operates, and from the various purpoſes which thoſe who practiſe it have in view, may be regarded in ſeveral very different lights. It is a curious and intereſting branch of natural philoſophy; it is a trade or craft by which many perſons live; it is a practical art, the object of which is to cure diſeaſes, when this can be done; and when it cannot be done, at leaſt to alleviate the ſuf-

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ferings of the patients. Every piece of medical practice may be regarded in relation to each of thoſe views, which are in no degree inconſiſtent with one another; juſt as the practitioner, or any other man, may be conſidered, not as what he is in himſelf, but what he is in relation to others. The ſame man, in different relations, will be thought and called a father, a ſon, a huſband, a brother, a friend or enemy, debtor or creditor, plaintiff or defendant. Even ſo, the moſt common piece of medical practice, conſidered in relation to the patient, may be an act of the greateſt kindneſs that one human being can do to another, and, as ſuch, will always be gratefully remembered by the perſon whom it ſaved from death, or relieved from pain and ſickneſs, or to whom it reſtored thoſe who were deareſt to him. Such things are done times innumerable every day by practitioners, who have no view either to the advancement of their ſcience, or to any pecuniary emolument to themſelves. But much *good* medical practice is done, and many a learned preſcription is written, by Phyſicians, who think no more, either of benevolence to their patients, or of the improvement of phyſic, than the apothecary does who makes up the medicines, or the undertaker who furniſhes the coffins which are wanted, at the ſhop-price of their reſpective goods: it is the Doctor's trade, by which he muſt live, and he is honeſtly labouring in his vocation, thinking only of the one thing needful. The ſame pieces of practice, when the Phyſician has it in view carefully to obſerve and record the reſult, to arrange it with ſimilar obſervations, and from many ſuch compared together, to deduce general concluſions for the advancement of his ſcience and the improvement of his art, are regarded as experiments; but ſurely they are experiments of the moſt innocent and laudable kind. Thouſands of theſe experiments may eſcape the obſervation of the patients themſelves, as well as of thoſe who are about them, and moſt deeply intereſted in their welfare. Nothing violent, nothing un-

uſual may be attempted; no extraordinary or diſtreſſing ſymptoms may occur, the former ſymptoms of the diſeaſe may ſoon be relieved, or the diſeaſe may be completely cured. In other caſes, the ſymptoms may gradually grow worſe; the diſeaſe may run its natural courſe, and terminate fatally in the uſual manner; the practice employed, or experiments made, not availing the patient. But in many caſes, the practice or experiment which the Phyſician is obliged to try, in order to give the patient his beſt or only chance for life, muſt be of ſuch a nature as to excite anxiety and alarm. The remedy employed may be uncommon; it may be violent in appearance, or even in reality, from its immediate effects. Nay, it may be dangerous, and the Phyſician may even have intimated this to the patient or his friends. But as on ſuch occaſions the danger, in caſe of failure, is very great to the Phyſician himſelf, I mean in point of fame and fortune, this kind of practice or experiment is but ſeldom tried by regular Phyſicians of eſtabliſhed character; too ſeldom indeed, to the beſt of my judgment. The caſe I believe is different with the irregulars, who have every thing to gain, and nothing to loſe; who know, that whatever good they do, the world proclaimeth, and whatever ill they do, the earth covereth. Yet ſuch irregulars, though they kill many patients by their raſh and blundering practice, have certainly cured ſome in very unfavourable ſituations, by means well known to the regulars, but which, on account of their real or ſuppoſed danger, theſe were afraid to employ. It muſt even be acknowledged, however mortifying it may be to the pride of the regular faculty, that we owe to the quacks the knowledge and uſe of ſeveral of the moſt powerful medicines which we now generally employ; ſuch as opium, antimony, mercury, and many others. Still, however, the number of really uſeful medicines bears ſo ſmall a proportion to the vaſt multitude of uſeleſs drugs that from time to time have been introduced, and highly extolled,

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both by quacks and by regular Phyſicians, that the regular faculty have in general a ſtrong tendency to diſtruſt all new medicines, and of courſe a reluctance even to try them. It was long ago remarked by Bacon, and the obſervation is juſt as true at preſent as it was in his time, that regular Phyſicians are always more diſpoſed to expect advantage in medicine from the improvement of the general plan of practice in a diſeaſe, than from the extraordinary virtues of any particular medicine that may be propoſed; while thoſe not of the medical profeſſion, being ignorant or regardleſs of that kind of improvement in phyſic, are always credulous with reſpect to the good effects of every new medicine that they hear recommended. The reaſon of this difference is obvious; thoſe not of our profeſſion hear only of the few caſes in which ſuch medicines were or ſeemed to be ſucceſsful. Phyſicians know to their ſorrow the many caſes in which they do no good, and ſome in which they do harm; and are neceſſarily forced to doubt, whether, in the moſt favourable caſes, they had really done that good which both practitioners and patients had moſt confidently believed. Theſe things are ſo well and ſo generally known, that moſt perſons of competent judgment, if they had read this vindication of the Clinical Profeſſors, from the charge of trying wanton and dangerous experiments on their patients, without knowing what gave occaſion to it, would have regarded it as mere affectation: but the ſtrong paſſage quoted from Mr John Bell's pamphlet will effectually preclude all ſuch ſurmiſes on this occaſion.

There is yet another circumſtance in medical practice or experiments on patients which I muſt beg leave to ſtate in its true light, becauſe it is on all occaſions, but eſpecially in an hoſpital or in a clinical ward, eaſily miſrepreſented by the malevolent, and really miſunderſtood by thoſe who ſee only what is done, or perhaps but a part of it, and who know nothing of the reaſons for which ſuch things are done. To this kind of practice I alluded

in my former Memorial, (page 140.), in a few obſervations that I made on the neceſſary employment of our moſt powerful remedies, ſuch as are often required in the moſt urgent and dangerous caſes, in which the patient's chance for recovery is very ſmall, and in which there may be even ſome danger from the violent effects of the remedies themſelves. Nothing can be eaſier than to impute to the operation of thoſe ſtrong remedies all the unfavourable ſymptoms, or even the death of the patient, if ſuch things happen after their uſe. But candour and common ſenſe require that the moſt favourable conſtruction ſhould be put on the conduct of a Phyſician in thoſe trying and vexatious circumſtances. A very little reflection muſt convince every perſon of good ſenſe, that it is not alone the danger, real or ſuppoſed, of any piece of practice that ought to be conſidered, but the difference between that danger and the danger to which the patient was expoſed from his diſeaſe. I do not think the danger of any common medicine, or common mode of practice, if employed with but tolerable judgment, nearly ſo great as has often been ſaid, both by the vulgar, who are ſometimes pleaſed to fancy that Phyſicians had killed thoſe patients who died under their care, and by Phyſicians themſelves, who now and then have the goodneſs to pay that compliment to their brethren. The reſult of my own obſervation on the practice of phyſic has been a ſtrong conviction, that for one patient who is killed by the regular faculty by the uſe of violent and dangerous remedies, twenty, or perhaps a hundred, are allowed to die without getting that chance of recovery which ſuch powerful remedies would have given them. But ſuppoſing the violent remedies to which I allude to be as dangerous as ever was pretended, if the danger of the diſeaſe was ſtill greater and more urgent, or if the diſeaſe was almoſt certainly fatal unleſs ſuch remedies were employed, the uſe of them muſt be conſidered as leſſening the danger of the patient. It ought alſo to be conſidered, in another point

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of view, that the ſtate of the body in certain diſeaſes greatly leſſens the danger of ſome of our moſt violent remedies, at the ſame time that it makes thoſe remedies moſt peculiarly neceſſary. Nay, there are certain conditions of the body, in particular diſeaſes, that make it almoſt inſenſible to ſome of our moſt powerful medicines, or at leaſt make it neceſſary to adminiſter theſe medicines in quantities much larger than would be given, or could be required, in other diſeaſes; perhaps in ſuch quantities as would be certainly fatal to a ſtrong perſon in perfect health. I believe very violent fever, and certainly violent internal inflammation connected with high fever, while it requires large bleeding, at the ſame time enables the body to bear it with leſs danger and inconvenience than it could have done in health. In the courſe of ſuch a diſeaſe, a patient, who had fainted on the firſt and ſecond bleeding, though not very large, has been known to bear two or three ſubſequent bleedings, much larger, without fainting, and with great benefit. In dropſy it often happens, eſpecially when the head becomes affected, that ſtrong purges have no effect, though given in double or triple the common doſes; yet if given in ſtill larger doſes, they ſometimes anſwer perfectly well. In the locked jaw, and I underſtand the caſe to be the ſame in the hydrophobia, (from the bite of a mad dog), opium, in double or perhaps ten times its uſual doſe, may have little or no effect; yet if given in ſtill larger doſes, it may cure a painful and horrible diſeaſe, which otherwiſe would be fatal in two days. It can ſcarce be neceſſary to ſay, that in ſuch caſes no Phyſician in his ſenſes would preſcribe at once bleeding to ſuch an amount, or ſuch enormous quantities of ſtrong medicines, as may eventually be found neceſſary. It is to be preſumed, that all ſuch pieces of practice will be tried at firſt in moderation, though with vigour, and repeated and puſhed farther, as circumſtances may require. On this plan, I conceive, that even the poſitive danger from them muſt be but

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ſmall, and the relative danger from them, eſtimated by their influence on a ſtill more dangerous diſeaſe, muſt be ſtill ſmaller, or next to nothing. But when only the marvellous part of ſuch practice is told, without mentioning the reaſons of it, and the precautions with which it was tried, it will neceſſarily be regarded as an experiment of the moſt unwarrantable and horrible kind. This kind of miſrepreſentation I myſelf have experienced, from ſome of my own pupils, not from any malevolence on their part, but quite the contrary, from their being highly pleaſed with my ſucceſs by ſuch practice in ſome very unfavourable caſes; of which they told only the wonderful part, ſuppreſſing, or perhaps forgetting, what was of much more conſequence. Some of thoſe caſes, if Mr John Bell and his clients had known of them, would have been much better for their purpoſe than the pretended bold experiment of giving arſenic for the cure of an intermittent fever: which by the by was no experiment of mine; for at the time when his pamphlet was publiſhed, I had not once given arſenic in an intermittent fever. Patients, whether in private practice or in hoſpitals, unleſs they are informed of it by ſome malicious meddling perſons, cannot know either what medicines, or what doſes of them they are getting; nor conſequently can they be alarmed with the notion of being made the ſubjects of ſuch experiments: but ſometimes it becomes neceſſary, both in public and private practice, to employ very rough and violent remedies, both the kind and degree of which muſt be well known to the patient, and to all about him; and when ſuch remedies prove unſucceſsful, as muſt often happen, the Phyſician who preſcribed them muſt at leaſt be blamed, and may think himſelf fortunate if he do not become the object of indignation and horror. In illuſtration of what I have ſaid, I ſhall mention two examples of this kind, which befel myſelf in the clinical wards; both of which caſes, though one of them ended favourably, gave me for ſome time much uneaſineſs;

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as I feared they might have excited ſome popular clamour, not only againſt myſelf, but againſt the clinical wards, and the Hoſpital in general.

In January 1799, I got into the clinical ward a young man, whoſe ſituation was ſuch, that I judged it neceſſary to employ on him, without delay, ſome pieces of practice, which to himſelf, and his friends, and the other patients, muſt have appeared at leaſt very ſevere and cruel, if not very dangerous experiments. Cold as the weather was, he was laid out naked on the floor, and large quantities of cold water were daſhed all over his body and limbs; then he was wrapt up in blankets, and put to bed, and got large doſes of laudanum. Theſe practices were frequently repeated as long as he lived; but he died in two days. The other patients and their viſitors, who ſaw what was doing, and muſt have heard repeatedly that the doſes of laudanum which he was getting were uncommonly great, could ſcarce fail to think that he was killed by the practice which I employed. Every Phyſician will underſtand, even by what I have ſaid of it, that his diſeaſe could be nothing but the locked jaw, or *tetanus*, a diſeaſe of moſt excruciating pain, and ſuch extreme danger, that very few recover from it, and moſt of thoſe who are attacked by it die within five days; eſpecially when it is produced by a wound, which was the caſe in that patient. In him it had ſubſiſted three days before I ſaw him, and in that time had made very rapid progreſs; ſo that I was almoſt certain he could not live two days longer, unleſs the progreſs of the diſeaſe could be ſtopped by ſome very powerful remedies. I knew of none ſo likely to do good as thoſe that I employed. I did not conſider them as dangerous, though one of them, the affuſion of cold water, was certainly ſevere. At any rate, the danger from the remedies could bear no proportion to that from the diſeaſe, and the employing of them was certainly leſſening the danger of the patient, and giving him his beſt or only chance for his life. But theſe things his friends,

friends, and the other patients could not know: and very probably, even when they heard that his diſeaſe was a locked jaw, they would think of no other danger from it but that of the patient being gradually ſtarved to death; which I underſtand is the vulgar notion of the nature and danger of a locked jaw. It would have been in vain to tell them, that the ſevere practice of daſhing cold water on the body of the patient in that diſeaſe had been recommended by Hippocrates two thouſand two hundred years ago, had been neglected for two thouſand years or more, and had been revived, and again brought into repute, within theſe thirty years; and that, next to it, the adminiſtration of opium, in large doſes, frequently repeated, ſeemed the moſt powerful remedy; and that both together formed, if not the whole, at leaſt by far the greateſt part of the practice, which every Phyſician of competent knowledge would wiſh to have employed on himſelf, or on his beſt friends, if they were ill of the ſame diſeaſe; and that it would be my indiſpenſable duty to employ the ſame remedies, if poſſible with greater vigour, eſpecially the opium, in ſtill larger doſes, in any ſimilar caſe. To this hour I know not how I have eſcaped thoſe animadverſions, which I expected for my practice, and my bad ſucceſs in that caſe; unleſs it was, that the converſation of my pupils ſufficiently explained to the other patients the urgent danger of the diſeaſe, and the neceſſity of trying thoſe ſeemingly cruel and dangerous experiments.

On another occaſion, in ſummer 1797, I made a ſtill narrower eſcape from thoſe reproaches, or thoſe extravagant encomiums, which Mr John Bell and his clients have ſo liberally beſtowed on the Clinical Profeſſors. A young man came under my care in the clinical ward, who had been ill of a pleuriſy for ſeveral days. The ſymptoms were ſo uncommonly violent, that there could be no doubt about the nature of the diſeaſe, the urgent danger of it, and the only remedy, namely, large bleeding, that could give the patient

tient a chance for his life. The youngeſt of my pupils muſt have known all theſe things juſt as well as I did. The remedy certainly was not ſpared; my man underwent three large bleedings within twenty-four hours, but without the leaſt benefit; indeed he evidently grew worſe, and after the third bleeding my clerk came to tell me that he was much worſe, and ſeemed to be dying. This was no ſurpriſe to me, who had been aware of his great danger from the moment I ſaw him; but as I was not diſpoſed to give him up, without uſing every effort to ſave him, I went immediately to the Hoſpital, and finding his ſtrength ſtill entire, though the ſymptoms of his diſeaſe were dreadfully urgent, I inſtantly ordered another bleeding for him, and ſtaid to ſee it performed, and to obſerve the effect of it. It was the largeſt I ever witneſſed, and much larger than any bleeding that I ever preſcribed. I expected and wiſhed to have made him faint by that bleeding: for ſuch fainting, I am confident, often does good; but this, like every other point in phyſic, has been the ſubject of keen and endleſs diſpute. He bore the loſs of thirty-two ounces (a full Engliſh quart) of blood without fainting; and I durſt go no farther. Next day I found him worſe than ever, but ſtill, as I thought, able to bear another bleeding; which I conceived might give him ſome chance, though but a very ſmall one, for life. It was tried without delay, and I ſtaid to obſerve the effect of it. To enſure, as I thought, his fainting, I made him ſit erect when he was bled; and in that poſture he bore the loſs of more than twenty ounces of blood; making in all ninety-ſeven ounces, that were taken from him in three ſucceſſive days, but within forty-eight hours. At that time he was ſeized with hiccup, and I could obſerve ſome ſpaſms in his face; ſo that it might be ſaid, and in fact was ſaid, without exaggeration, that I had bled him into convulſions. One or two of my pupils, who were very attentive to all that paſſed, took fright, and ran out of the room, believing all was over, and that the man was inſtantly to die in my hands; and

I confeſs I had my own ſhare of uneaſineſs for ſome minutes; though, for a reaſon that I ſhall mention afterwards, I was not ſo much diſconcerted as my pupils were. On laying the man down on his bed, the ſpaſms went off, as ſoon and as eaſily as a fainting fit commonly does; and from that moment the patient was in a manner cured; the violent ſymptoms of his diſeaſe inſtantly ceaſed, and, without the help of any other remedy, he recovered as well as any patient I ever ſaw in that diſeaſe, and much faſter than ſuch patients commonly do. That was his good luck, and mine too; for if he had died at that time, it would have been a reproach to me as long as I lived, probably even to the Hoſpital in which I practiſed, and to the medical ſchool in which I have the honour to be a Profeſſor: for in two or three weeks, that is, by the time my man was diſmiſſed cured from the Hoſpital, the hiſtory of his caſe was known at Geneva; ſome gentlemen from that city having been my pupils at that time, and having, as I ſoon learned, regaled their friends at home with an account of a mode of practice very different from any that they had ever ſeen or heard of. I take it for granted, that they would have been at leaſt as communicative if my practice had been unſucceſsful. Such is the ſafety of the clinical wards as a place in which to try dangerous experiments. In that intereſting caſe, if I had ſtopped ſhort after the third bleeding, and allowed my man to die, which to the beſt of my judgment he muſt have done in two days, or perhaps in one, I ſhould have had the credit of doing all that could be done to ſave him. If I had ſtopped ſhort after the fourth large bleeding, and allowed him to die, which I am confident would have been his fate, it would have been a noble ſubject of diſpute, whether his diſeaſe or my exceſſive bleedings (ſeventy-five ounces in thirty hours) had killed him. But if he had died after the fifth bleeding, whether inſtantly or not, there could have been no diſpute at all that I had killed him by ſuch horrible bleeding. In lecturing on that caſe,

I wiſhed to tell my pupils, but durſt not, becauſe I had forgotten my authority, which I afterwards found in a biographical book, that Dr Radcliffe, the greateſt Phyſician in London about a hundred years ago, when ill of the ſame diſeaſe (pleuriſy) at the age of ſixty, was bled to the amount of a hundred ounces in one day; by which means he was cured, though he had been ſo ill that for ſome time he was abſolutely deſpaired of. Radcliffe was a brute, but he was not a fool; and certainly would neither have ſubmitted to ſuch practice, nor, what I preſume was the caſe, have directed it for himſelf, without knowing that it was neceſſary; and though not perhaps altogether ſafe, at leaſt not near ſo dangerous as the diſeaſe which it was intended to cure. It happened, however, that at that time I could explain to my pupils why I was not ſo much alarmed as ſome of them had been when my patient fell into ſpaſms, inſtead of fainting, on his laſt great bleeding. About a twelvemonth before, I had met with the ſame embarraſſing ſymptom repeatedly, in a young lady ill of the ſame diſeaſe. In her the ſymptoms were ſo violent and obſtinate, that five bleedings were required in the courſe of a week; every one of which, except the firſt, produced ſtrong ſpaſms inſtead of fainting. Though the abſolute quantity of blood taken from her was much leſs than that taken from my clinical patient, yet relatively to her bulk or weight it was more. Without that rough practice, or even with leſs of it, I firmly believe ſhe muſt have died; but by a favourable concurrence of circumſtances ſhe recovered perfectly. Her father, having been bred to phyſic, underſtood thoroughly the nature, the danger, and the method of cure of her diſeaſe; her mother was a woman of uncommon firmneſs and good ſenſe; and though both of them had in a manner given her up, they were well pleaſed that we (Mr Ruſſell and myſelf) ſhould do every thing that we thought could give her a chance for recovery.

It can ſcarce be neceſſary to ſay, that in ſimilar caſes I ſhould be ready, and think myſelf bound, to employ the ſame ſevere and ſeemingly dangerous practice which proved ſucceſsful in thoſe caſes: but even if it had been unſucceſsful in them, I muſt equally have employed it in ſimilar caſes, as being on the whole the beſt, or only ſucceſsful practice that I know of, in that diſeaſe, and ſome others of the ſame general nature. If my man had died, when I only intended to make him faint, by a large bleeding, it would not have deterred me from ſubmitting to the ſame practice myſelf; which but a few months after I was fain to do, twice in one day, and with great benefit, when I had the misfortune to be ill of the ſame diſeaſe. It would be folly to expect that in every caſe, and very doubtful whether in the very next caſe, in which I may have occaſion to try it, I ſhall be ſucceſsful by ſuch practice; yet in the clinical wards, and in private practice, equally, it will be my duty to try it.

What I have ſtated thus ſtrongly, and particularly, with reſpect to thoſe two extraordinary and very dangerous caſes, I muſt preſume, till I have evidence of the contrary, to be equally true with reſpect to the practice of the Clinical Profeſſors, in the more common and leſs dangerous caſes which every day come under their care: namely, that, to the beſt of their judgment, they have hitherto done, and will continue to do, what is beſt for the patients; whether this be the employing of new or of old, of ſevere or gentle, of ſafe or of dangerous remedies. This is unqueſtionably their duty to the patients in the firſt place, and in the ſecond place their duty to their pupils: for it is a propoſition too plain to admit either of doubt, or proof, or illuſtration, that whatever is beſt for the patients, is alſo beſt for the ſtudents to ſee and learn; and, I may add, is moſt for the eaſe, the honour, and the advantage, of the Profeſſors themſelves.

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The two ſtriking caſes which I have ſtated are not given as a fair ſample of the common practice, either by myſelf or my colleagues, in the clinical wards, but quite the contrary; as the two, of all that I could remember, which might moſt naturally have been miſunderſtood, or moſt eaſily miſrepreſented, and quoted as inſtances of the moſt wanton, cruel, and dangerous experiments. In this horrible light I dare ſay they will ſtill appear to many people, who have no notion, either of the violence and danger of ſome diſeaſes, or of what the human body can do or ſuffer. Thoſe happy patients, who have never felt ſuch diſeaſes or ſuch practice, but who are every day ſuffering the pangs, that is, paying the regulated price, of lazineſs, luxury, pride, and riches, and who are anxious only to ſettle whether they ſhall be bilious or nervous, whether they ſhall have the gout or the liver, whether they ſhall go to Cheltenham or to Tunbridge, to Bath or to Margate, muſt regard ſuch practice with peculiar horror; dreading leſt ſome bloody-minded phyſician ſhould employ it on their own perſons. But they need not be afraid: even a ſucking Doctor would not think of killing the gooſe that laid him golden eggs day by day; and they may be aſſured, that, as long as there remains in an apothecary's ſhop one nauſeous uſeleſs drug, no Phyſician will preſcribe for them a remedy that might endanger ſuch precious lives; lives which, whatever they may be in other reſpects, and to other people, are ineſtimable to our moſt noble Faculty, and will always be cheriſhed with care, and lengthened, if poſſible, to the age of the antediluvian patriarchs.

The rougher and ſeemingly dangerous practice, of which I have given ſuch examples, is never employed by any of us without reluctance, or without the moſt urgent neceſſity; and in private practice, eſpecially among patients in affluent circumſtances, it is ſeldom employed without the authority of a conſultation; which Phyſicians, in ſuch caſes, are glad to propoſe, at leaſt as much for their own ſake as for that of their patients. Even in judging of the

the danger of certain pieces of medical practice, and of the ſuppoſed demerit of the Phyſician who preſcribed them in caſes which terminated unfavourably, thoſe who are not of the medical profeſſion almoſt always fall into many miſtakes. They very generally have no notion of the danger of the diſeaſe for which they are preſcribed; in many caſes they are not aware, and when told will hardly believe, that they or their friends have got ſuch a diſeaſe: they ſuppoſe many remedies to be highly dangerous, or at leaſt ſevere, which are not ſo in the leaſt, with the ſame unthinking confidence that they believe many circumſtances in their common way of life to be perfectly ſafe, which every Phyſician knows to be highly dangerous. A blooming girl of eighteen can conceive no danger in a ſlight cough, and a ſtill ſlighter pain in her ſide; which a Phyſician may almoſt certainly know to be the firſt ſymptoms or threatenings of a conſumption, that in ſpite of every effort of medical ſkill will probably be fatal in leſs than a twelvemonth. A bliſter or a bleeding propoſed by a Phyſician in ſuch a caſe, eſpecially if the patient fainted on bleeding, would be regarded by her, and perhaps by her mother alſo, as very rough and cruel, if not even dangerous practice: and very probably, inſtead of following ſuch rational and ſafe advice, Miſs, with her Mamma's approbation, would go to a ball, and dance from midnight till eight in the morning; never once dreaming that ſhe was dancing into her coffin. A guzzling Alderman, on the verge of apoplexy, would be terrified at the propoſal of a large bleeding, or even of a good purge, and would think himſelf in the moſt imminent danger of being ſtarved to death, if he were adviſed to content himſelf with little more than double the quantity of nouriſhment that is found ſufficient to ſupport a ſturdy ploughman in health and ſtrength. But ſuch an Alderman can conceive no danger in a good dinner, and a bottle of wine after it; which every Phyſician might know to be ſo dangerous to him, that before his dinner could be half digeſted, or even his bottle

bottle of wine finiſhed, the worthy magiſtrate probably might be in another world.

(22.). *Without a new inſtitution to ſupport, they receive the fees of the numerous pupils.* This paſſage deſerves peculiar attention and praiſe, for there is ſomething very remarkable and meritorious in it. It is literally true. Perhaps there may be a few more paſſages in Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me that have the ſame kind of merit, or at leaſt ſome degree of it; but *apparent rari nantes in gurgite vaſto.* Thoſe *truiſms*, if there be any ſuch in his pamphlet, are ſo loſt in the blaze of his ſplendid poetical and rhetorical fictions, that I cannot diſcover them; elſe I ſhould have had great pleaſure in pointing them out, and acknowledging the juſtneſs and ſeverity of them all, as I do of that one at preſent under review. That deadly ſin of pocketing our fees is indeed the ſin that moſt eaſily beſets us; none of us are free from it, or ever were ſuppoſed to be ſo. Many good and wiſe men conſider it as abſolutely eſſential to the notion of a Phyſician; juſt as extenſion in one dimenſion is eſſential to a line, in two to a ſurface, in three to a ſolid. Certain it is, that though many a Phyſician may be found without a head, or brains, or heart, or bowels, no Phyſician was ever yet known that did not take his fees. If ſuch a monſter ſhould appear on the face of the earth, of which I truſt there is little danger, he would not be permitted to live; for all his brethren would inſiſt on preſcribing for him, even without a fee. As to the receiving of fees from ſtudents who attend the clinical lectures, I myſelf have been a moſt miſerable ſinner; having received to my own ſhare near L. 3000 in that way, all which I pocketed without remorſe; never once ſuſpecting that it was the price of blood, and even finding much pleaſure in the thought, that the Royal Infirmary muſt have received within the ſame period of twenty-ſeven years at leaſt *three*

times

times as much from the ſame ſtudents. During the laſt thirteen years, I have been one of four or five Profeſſors who took a ſhare in the clinical lectures; but during the fourteen years preceding, I was one of two Profeſſors who had them between us; and during the whole ſeven and twenty years, I am convinced not one ſtudent attended the clinical lectures without paying as much to the Infirmary as he did to the Profeſſors. In this way I conceive that the clinical lectures always have added conſiderably to the funds of the Houſe: which Mr John Bell, in the paſſage under review, is pleaſed to ſay they do not; and gives his reaſon in theſe words: " *Since thoſe pupils pay to the Infirmary no more than the* " *ordinary fees.*" This is true; but the inference from it is erroneous: for every year many pupils take tickets for the Infirmary, purely on account of the clinical lectures: many for this reaſon take tickets two or three years, who but for the clinical lectures would have attended the Infirmary only one year, or perhaps would not have attended it at all; as having ſeen abundance of hoſpital practice before they came to Edinburgh. I ſhould gueſs it would be the ſame to the funds of the Hoſpital, whether the money that comes to them proceed from a certain number of ſtudents paying a double fee, or from double the number of ſtudents paying the common fee to the Infirmary; and the latter mode is infinitely better for the ſtudents and for the public.

(23) *They* (the Clinical Profeſſors) *have poſſeſſion of wards larger and better appointed than thoſe allotted to our ſurgical department.* Something of the ſame kind is ſtated (No. 7.) in theſe words: " *You* " *allotted them alſo wards ſuperior in every reſpect to thoſe of the Sur-* " *geons.*" From theſe conſiderations having been ſtated ſo ſtrongly, and repeatedly, we may infer, that Mr John Bell and his clients thought them of great importance, and that they wiſhed peculiarly to ſtake their veracity on the truth of what they aſſerted. But their uſual bad luck with reſpect to matters of fact has attend-

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ed them even on this point. As to the ſuperiority and better appointment of the clinical wards, when compared with thoſe of the Surgeons, I know nothing of it; and cannot even gueſs what is meant by it, unleſs it be ſomething inconſiſtent with the more important propoſition aſſerted, namely, the clinical being larger than the Surgeons wards. The clinical are in fact much ſmaller than the Surgeons wards: and as each of them has, at each of its four corners, like the other wards in the Hoſpital, a room capable of holding conveniently two beds, thoſe private rooms neceſſarily bear a greater proportion to the whole of the clinical wards, than can take place in the larger wards of this Infirmary. As to the important aſſertion, that the clinical are larger than the Surgeons wards, it is wonderful how any individual, or any ſet of men, ſhould have ſtaked their veracity on ſuch a point. The clinical wards contain, without crowding, two and thirty beds; one half of which are in the private rooms already mentioned: but one of thoſe rooms in the mens ward, and one bed in the womens ward, muſt be deducted for the accommodation of the two nurſes: there remain, then, without crowding, nine and twenty beds for patients. The largeſt of the Surgeons wards for men contains, without crowding, twenty-eight beds; the ſmalleſt of their mens wards, being exactly of the ſame ſize with one of the clinical wards, and bounded by the ſame walls, which are carried from the foundation to the roof of the Hoſpital, contains ſixteen beds: one room capable of containing two beds, muſt be deducted from each ward for the accommodation of the nurſes; but without crowding, thoſe two wards can accommodate forty men patients. The Surgeons ward for women contains nineteen beds; one of which being deducted for the uſe of the nurſe, there will remain eighteen beds for patients. This number added to forty makes fifty-eight; ſo that on the whole, to the beſt of my arithmetic, the Surgeons wards, far from being ſmaller than the clinical, are juſt *twice as large*. The ſmaller of the

two mens wards, which the Surgeons have at preſent, they got within theſe twenty years: but even the other two great wards, one for men and the other for women, which they have had ever ſince their patients were ſeparated from thoſe of the Phyſicians, are larger than the clinical wards, in the proportion of *three* to *two*. But, for the ſatisfaction and the honour of Mr John Bell and his clients, in whoſe aſſertion there certainly can be no *miſtake*, I think all thoſe very intereſting and difficult arithmetical queſtions ſhould be referred to a profeſſed accountant.

Out of many paſſages in the ſection of Mr John Bell's pamphlet at preſent under review, which are evidently intended to excite indignation and horror againſt the Clinical Profeſſors and their practice, I ſhall ſelect a few of the moſt ſplendid, and ſuch as may be diſmiſſed with a very ſhort commentary. By way of contraſt to the frequent and multitudinous conſultations of Surgeons, on which I had taken the liberty to make a few dry remarks in my former Memorial, Mr John Bell tells us, (N° 29.), *but in the clinical ward the Phyſician in attendance is always alone, and unaſſiſted; his office is indeed of ſuch a nature as will not allow of advice or aſſiſtance.* It is very true that the Profeſſors viſit their patients in the clinical wards, and preſcribe for them, unaſſiſted and unattended by any other Phyſician; juſt as the ordinary Phyſicians of this and every other hoſpital viſit their hoſpital-patients, and as all Phyſicians do with their patients in private practice, in at leaſt nineteen caſes out of twenty. Surely no perſon, however affluent his circumſtances might be, would chooſe to be plagued with a conſultation of Phyſicians, unleſs on the ſuppoſition of there being ſome peculiar doubt, or difficulty, or danger, in his caſe: for no man in his right wits would ever think of intruſting his health or life to a Phyſician whom he did not believe to have at leaſt competent knowledge of his profeſſion. To the beſt of my knowledge, by far the greater number of conſultations of our Faculty are called at the requeſt or ſuggeſtion of the Phyſician who firſt had the

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care of the patient, and found his caſe peculiarly difficult and dangerous. The ſituation of patients in the clinical wards is certainly *not worſe*, in any reſpect, than that of the ſame patients would be, if they were viſited and preſcribed for by the ſame Phyſician ſingly, in their own houſes; which I preſume moſt of them would conſider as a very great happineſs. But in truth their ſituation is *better* in thoſe wards than very probably it would be if they were viſited by the ſame Phyſician in their own houſes, not only in reſpect of proper accommodation, care, diet, and medicines, but even in reſpect of the attention and medical ſkill of the Phyſician; whoſe office of Clinical Profeſſor neceſſarily obliges him to the utmoſt efforts of his attention, in ſtudying their caſes, and applying remedies to their diſeaſes. It is difficult to conceive what Mr John Bell means by ſaying, that the Clinical Profeſſor's *office is indeed of ſuch a nature as will not allow of advice or aſſiſtance.* He certainly may receive, and often does receive, advice and aſſiſtance, from his profeſſional brethren, in the treatment of his clinical patients, juſt as eaſily and effectually as he or any other Phyſician can do, with reſpect to his patients in private practice. There is even peculiar facility in getting that aſſiſtance, from the opportunities which occur every day, by the ordinary Phyſicians of the Hoſpital and the Clinical Profeſſors viſiting their reſpective wards at the ſame time. I never took the trouble to aſk my colleagues, and never chanced to hear, how they managed this matter; but I know well how eaſily I managed it myſelf. In caſes of doubt or difficulty, I have often got the late Dr John Hope, and Dr Hamilton, the ordinary Phyſicians of the Hoſpital, during the firſt twelve years of my attendance as Clinical Profeſſor, and even Dr Rutherford, (though I had been accuſtomed to attend in the Infirmary more than a dozen years before he came into it as one of the ordinary Phyſicians) to viſit my patients in the clinical wards along with me, and to give me their opinion

and advice with reſpect to their caſes. Theſe conſultations, for a very obvious reaſon, were almoſt always either juſt before or juſt after my regular public viſit; and very often were in the preſence of ten, twenty, or fifty, of the ſtudents; ſo that they muſt have been generally known, and indeed were never meant to be concealed. Still oftener I have conſulted with thoſe Phyſicians, and with Dr Cullen, by telling them the circumſtances of the caſes of my Hoſpital-patients, and my doubts and difficulties, without giving them the trouble to viſit my patients. In ſome caſes of peculiar anatomical nicety and difficulty, I have conſulted with Dr Monro about my clinical patients; and in many caſes, as Mr John Bell and his clients might have known, I have had a conſultation about them with the attending ſurgeon, and ſometimes with ſeveral of the ſurgeons.

Whatever exceptions Mr John Bell and his clients may take at the colour of my coat, the cut of my face, or the length of my legs, I preſume they will admit, that I am at leaſt as apt to take my own way, as moſt Phyſicians who have practiſed in the Royal Infirmary, or any where elſe: and therefore, what I was accuſtomed to do, for the moſt obvious reaſons of duty and expediency, I muſt preſume, till I have evidence of the contrary, that my colleagues do on ſimilar occaſions. I do not mean to ſay, that it ever was my practice, or that it is or ought to be theirs, to have recourſe to ſuch conſultations in every caſe of great and urgent danger, or even in every caſe that proved difficult or impoſſible to cure. It was chiefly in caſes of doubt and difficulty with reſpect to the nature of the diſeaſe, that I was anxious to have ſuch conſultations. In a vaſt proportion of unfavourable caſes there is no difficulty in knowing the nature of the diſeaſe, no doubt about what remedies ought to be tried to give the patient his beſt or only chance for recovery, and no doubt that that chance muſt be very ſmall, even though all the moſt approved remedies ſhould

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be tried in ſucceſſion: and as to caſes of very urgent danger, in which there yet may be great hopes from the ſpeedy and vigorous uſe of ſome powerful remedies, there is juſt as little need of a conſultation to tell a Phyſician of competent judgment and knowledge what he ought to do. If a Phyſician ſhould preſume to practiſe in the Clinical, or in any other wards of this Hoſpital, or in any hoſpital, without knowing what were the powerful remedies which ought to be employed in the moſt urgent caſes, his ſituation no doubt would be very embarraſſing; and that of his patients ſtill more ſo. But of ſuch embarraſſment I conceive there is little danger. The number of powerful remedies, which have a direct, or what is called a ſpecific power in curing certain diſeaſes, is very ſmall: infinitely ſmaller than is generally believed. The late Dr HEBERDEN of London, one of the moſt learned and eminent, and what is more to the purpoſe, one of the moſt judicious and candid Phyſicians that ever lived, after a long life ſpent in the practice of phyſic, declared, that he ſcarce knew any ſuch remedies, except quickſilver for the pox, brimſtone for the itch, Peruvian bark for agues, opium for certain convulſions, and Bath water for the crop-ſickneſs of drunkards. He mentions ſeveral other pretended ſpecific remedies, but very honeſtly and wiſely expreſſes his diſtruſt of them; and his doubts whether, beſides thoſe five, (the laſt two of which, however valuable they may be as remedies, ought to be deducted from the number of ſpecifics), there be ten others of ſuch great and almoſt certain efficacy. I am ſorry to ſay, that I do not know quite ſo many; nay not even one ſuch, beſides the few juſt mentioned. Of thoſe few remedies, and of the diſeaſes which may almoſt certainly be cured by them, and of the proper mode of adminiſtering the remedies, no Phyſician can be ſuppoſed ignorant. For want of ſuch ſpecific remedies, the greater, and by far the moſt important part of our practice, conſiſts in employing remedies of *great* and *general* efficacy; ſuch

as bleeding, vomits, purges, and other evacuations; or ſtimulants, ſuch as wine; or ſedatives and anodynes, ſuch as opium; according to the various circumſtances of *many different* diſeaſes. Of ſuch remedies, and their general effects on the body, and conſequently of their important and ſalutary operation in various circumſtances of diſeaſe, no Phyſician can be ſuppoſed ignorant even from the firſt; and his knowledge of thoſe things muſt increaſe every day of his practice. It is poſſible, however, that a Phyſician, eſpecially a young one, who knows perfectly all theſe things, may yet, from a very natural diffidence and timidity, be unwilling to rely on his own judgment, either in thoſe caſes which he conſiders as hopeleſs, or in thoſe in which he expects great benefit from the uſe of violent but dangerous remedies. A few conſultations with his elder and more experienced brethren, if his nerves be not incurably weak, will ſoon put him pretty much at eaſe, in ſuch caſes, by letting him ſee clearly what phyſic *can*, and what it *cannot* do. It is true, that in ſuch caſes, in private practice, conſultations are every day called: but this is not ſo much for the benefit of the patient, as for the ſecurity of the firſt Phyſician himſelf in point of fame and fortune; and alſo to prevent painful reflections in the friends and relations of the patient, who, if the caſe had been truſted entirely to one Phyſician, and had ended fatally, might have imputed the death of their friend to the unſkilfulneſs, the timidity, or the raſhneſs of that one Phyſician. But this kind of precaution never was, and never will be thought neceſſary in hoſpital-practice; and a Phyſician who conſtantly required conſultations to determine what was to be done in the plaineſt caſes of urgent danger, or to aſſure him that nothing could be done to any good purpoſe, in caſes evidently hopeleſs, would be laughed at and deſpiſed for his affectation and folly, inſtead of getting credit for his great modeſty, and extraordinary anxiety about his patients. If any of the Clinical Profeſſors have

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not availed themſelves of the advice and aſſiſtance of their profeſſional brethren, when they had, or thought they had, occaſion for it, it muſt have been entirely their own fault, and not in the leaſt the fault of the inſtitution of clinical lectures in this Hoſpital; which, far from making ſuch conſultations difficult or impoſſible, makes them peculiarly eaſy, and gives opportunities for them every day.

(26.) *At one time fevers, at another palſies, at another time hydropſies or convulſions, are in requeſt.* At all times a great variety of diſeaſes, and even the greateſt variety that can be got, muſt be in requeſt among the Clinical Profeſſors; for the moſt obvious reaſons in the world. Such a variety is moſt intereſting and moſt inſtructive to the ſtudents, and affords the Profeſſors the beſt materials for their lectures. But ſurely no injury can be done to the patients by that ſelection; who never were even ſuppoſed to get fevers or palſies, dropſies or convulſions, for the benefit or the amuſement of the Clinical Profeſſors, and their pupils; but having got ſuch diſeaſes, were received into the Hoſpital for their own benefit, and being received into it, could have no objections to be laid in the clinical wards, inſtead of the common large wards of the Hoſpital; nor any objections to being under the care of Phyſicians who were Profeſſors in the Univerſity, and were obliged to give a minute account of their practice on their hoſpital-patients, inſtead of being under the care of Phyſicians who were not Profeſſors, and under no ſuch obligation to give an account of their practice.

(N° 24.) *Without their purpoſe being obſerved, they can go into the waiting-room, and mark out the moſt dangerous diſeaſes as the ſubjects of their practice.* In this I can ſee no harm at all; and certainly no harm to the patients. It certainly does not make the diſeaſes more dangerous than they were before. The only poſſible danger is to the Profeſſors themſelves, the reſult of whoſe practice in the

the clinical wards, if compared with that of the ordinary Phyſicians in the common wards of the Hoſpital, might appear to the ignorant, and be repreſented by the malevolent, in a light very unfavourable to the Profeſſors. My rule in chooſing patients for the clinical wards, and I preſume the other Profeſſors have followed nearly the ſame, has always been, to take acute caſes, (fevers, inflammations, &c.), in preference to chronic caſes, (palſies, dropſies, convulſions, &c.): and of the chronic caſes, to take always the *worſt*, and moſt urgently dangerous, in preference to the ſlighter and leſs dangerous. My wiſh was to have *aut mors cita, aut victoria læta.* But when ſuch a choice is made of patients for the clinical wards, it *muſt neceſſarily* happen, that a much greater proportion of the patients in them, than of thoſe in the Hoſpital in general, ſhall die under cure. To ſuppoſe otherwiſe, would be not only to ſuppoſe the Clinical Profeſſors much better practitioners than the ordinary Phyſicians of the Hoſpital, which is abundantly abſurd; but further, to ſuppoſe alſo, that the ordinary Phyſicians were ſo ſtupid and ſo obſtinate, as either to be incapable of improving, or determined not to improve, by the more ſucceſsful practice of their brethren: for any particular remedy, or mode of practice, employed with extraordinary ſucceſs by the Clinical Profeſſors, muſt ſoon become known to the ordinary Phyſicians; who, for their own ſake, as well as that of their patients, would be obliged to employ it.

The average proportion of deaths in the Hoſpital in general, has hardly ever been leſs than four, or more than five in the hundred, of all the patients admitted into it. I do not know exactly what the average has been in the clinical wards: but I judge it has been at leaſt ſix or ſeven, perhaps eight, in the hundred; admitting however of great variations, according to the ſeaſon, the weather, and the prevailing epidemics. I know well the two extreme caſes in my own experience: in ſpring 1779, when the weather, in February,

bruary, March, and April, was as mild as it commonly is in ſummer, I loſt but one patient out of ſeventy: a few years afterwards, in three months of very ſevere winter-weather, I loſt twenty out of a hundred and twenty. The latter was four times the uſual proportion of the Hoſpital, the former but the third part of the uſual average. Any perſon, in the leaſt acquainted with the ſubject, will judge at once which of thoſe two courſes of clinical lectures was the better. It was ſometimes ſaid, whether with ſtrict truth or not I never took the trouble to enquire, that, during my attendance as Clinical Profeſſor, no Phyſician's patient died in the Hoſpital, but thoſe under my care. If this were literally and univerſally true, whenever the clinical wards are open, there would be no harm in it to any body: it could only happen from all the patients who were to die being taken into thoſe wards; and it muſt be the ſame to them whether they die in one ward or in another of the Hoſpital. To impute the deaths in the clinical wards as a matter of blame to the Profeſſors, whether on the ſcore of ignorance, negligence, or the trying of dangerous experiments on the patients, waving all thoughts of the illiberality and injuſtice of it, would be as abſurd as it would be to ſuppoſe the ordinary Phyſicians, juſt at that time, and only at that time, endowed with the miraculous gift of curing, or at leaſt of keeping alive, all their Hoſpital patients; and to give them great praiſe for that extraordinary though temporary qualification. No perſon of candour and common ſenſe will ever think a Phyſician reſponſible for the death of his patients; it is only for the neglect or miſmanagement of them that he can juſtly be blamed.

If a Clinical Profeſſor, in the courſe of his attendance in the Hoſpital, ſhould decline taking his equal ſhare with the ordinary Phyſicians of thoſe very dangerous caſes, of which a large proportion muſt be expected to end unfavourably, I ſhould think he acted very diſingenuouſly with reſpect to his pupils, and illiberally with reſpect

to the ordinary Phyſicians of the Hoſpital. His conduct would certainly, and moſt juſtly, be regarded as a vile piece of quackery, intended to impoſe on his pupils, by making them believe that he was much more ſkilful and ſucceſsful in his practice than the ordinary Phyſicians: but I preſume ſuch an attempt could not ſucceed, and would ſoon be reprobated with honeſt indignation.

When I mention thus freely the receiving, whether into the clinical or the common wards of the Hoſpital, patients who muſt be expected to die in it very ſoon, it muſt not be thought that I am either ignorant or regardleſs of the original inſtitution of this Infirmary, and of that clauſe in the charter of it which ſeems to forbid the receiving of any patients into it that could not be cured. This ſurely could not be meant, and it never was underſtood, ſtrictly and literally, as implying that the Phyſicians, on admitting a patient, *ipſo facto*, undertook with confidence to cure him. The meaning of the inſtitution to which I allude was no more, but that this Infirmary was not to be made a receptacle or hoſpital of incurables, to the excluſion of the ſick poor who might be cured if they were admitted into it. In this ſenſe, the regulation in queſtion is undoubtedly proper, as a general direction; though ſometimes there muſt be deviations from it, in favour of ſome miſerable objects, who, if not admitted into the Hoſpital, would ſoon periſh in the ſtreets; but who, when received into the Hoſpital, obtain, for a few days, or perhaps a few weeks, every relief and comfort which their calamitous ſituation requires, or can admit of. Even if this kind of deviation from the general principle were condemned and prohibited, the number of deaths in the Hoſpital would not be much leſſened. In general, it is impoſſible to know at firſt whether a diſeaſe is abſolutely incurable, or till ſome at leaſt of the remedies, uſually moſt ſucceſsful in ſuch a diſeaſe, have been fairly tried: and in the courſe of ſuch trials, many patients muſt certainly die. A Phyſician muſt be very young and inexperienced

inexperienced indeed, if not ſomething worſe, who does not know, that many caſes which appeared ſlight, and very favourable, have yet baffled all the powers of medicine, and proved either ſoon fatal, or permanently incurable: and that many caſes which at firſt appeared extremely dangerous, and almoſt hopeleſs, nay, which for ſome time had baffled the ſkill of Phyſicians and ſeveral powerful medicines, have yet yielded to other remedies, and been at laſt completely cured. In theſe reſpects, the practice of phyſic is juſt on the ſame footing with that of the noble profeſſion of the law. A young lawyer, if he is much of a coxcomb, which is ſaid to be ſometimes the caſe, will be ready to pronounce with confidence, that ſome untried cauſes are certainly good, and others as certainly bad and hopeleſs: but by the time he has been a few years at the bar, and has loſt two or three dozen of cauſes which he thought good, and won nearly as many which he thought bad, he learns to think, if not with more diffidence of his own judgment, at leaſt with more reſpect for the judgment of others, and with due reverence for the deciſions of a court of juſtice.

(No. 25.) *Sometimes when patients having uncommon diſeaſes are received by the ordinary Phyſicians, they are reclaimed by the Clinical Profeſſors, the rightful lords of the manor! This fact* is abſolutely new to me, though I have known the clinical wards for more than thirty years: and as Mr John Bell and his clients have been ſo generally unfortunate with reſpect to the numerous facts which they have aſſerted as confidently as this one, I ſtrongly ſuſpect that they have not been more lucky than uſual in this inſtance. I do not, however, preſume to contradict it poſitively, or to prove the direct contrary of it, as I have done with reſpect to many others of their facts; or to ſhow that it is impoſſible. I humbly leave it to them to prove it if they can. I acknowledge it to be *poſſible* that a Clinical Profeſſor ſhould act in a manner diſgraceful to himſelf,

brutal with reſpect to the patients, and illiberal and inſolent with reſpect to the ordinary Phyſicians; juſt as it is *poſſible* for a Clinical Profeſſor to run mad, or to get drunk, and in that ſituation to go to the Hoſpital and expoſe himſelf. But I am ſure no Clinical Profeſſors could behave in the manner expreſſed by Mr John Bell, on the principle which he has ſpecified, as *rightful Lords of the manor*; for they are not ſuch Lords: on the contrary, they know, and I thought every perſon acquainted with the Hoſpital had known, that they attend in it by the expreſs permiſſion of the Managers, who firſt allowed them *ten*, then *fifteen*, then *twenty* patients, for their eſtabliſhment; and who are unqueſtionably entitled, whenever they ſee cauſe for ſo doing, to reduce the number of their patients to fifteen, or to ten, or to ſhut up the clinical wards altogether, or allot them to the ordinary Phyſicians of the houſe, and forbid any Medical Profeſſor ever to enter it. The point in queſtion is not new or imaginary. For many years the Managers permitted in the Hoſpital a lying-in ward, under the care of the Profeſſor of Midwifery: but having learned by much experience, that this was an improper inſtitution, they very wiſely aboliſhed it. I have no doubt they would do, as they certainly ought to do, the ſame with reſpect to the clinical wards, if ever they heard of the Clinical Profeſſors behaving brutally towards the patients, or inſolently towards the ordinary Phyſicians. I can ſay with confidence, that I never heard of any of my colleagues behaving in that manner; and that I never did or thought of doing ſo myſelf, during all my long attendance as Clinical Profeſſor. I always conſidered the circumſtance of a patient being taken into the common medical wards, under the care of the ordinary Phyſician, as an inſurmonutable bar to my getting him into the clinical ward, unleſs the Phyſician under whoſe care he was recommended him to me as a proper patient; which the ordinary Phyſicians have often done in the moſt liberal and obliging manner; and unleſs the *patient himſelf was willing to*

come

come under my care, which has not always been the caſe on ſuch occaſions. I ſuſpect (but this muſt be underſtood with a *ſalvo jure* to Mr John Bell and his clients, who are well entitled to prove, if they can, their own fact) that his account of the conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors, which to me appears ſo new and marvellous, is only a rhetorical embelliſhment of what may be ſeen every day on the *admiſſion-liſt*, which is always ſigned by one or other of the ordinary Phyſicians, never by the Clinical Profeſſors. In that liſt, which is the warrant to the matron of the Infirmary to put on the eſtabliſhment, and provide with food and beds, the patients whoſe names are found in it, there is a column for the purpoſe of marking what wards of the Hoſpital the ſeveral patients are to be ſent to, as ſoldiers, ſailors, ſervants, clinical, or medical ordinary. If the Clinical Profeſſor or his clerk get the ſtart of the ordinary Phyſician and his clerk, in the waiting-room, the patients whom he ſelects are marked originally in the admiſſion-liſt as *clinical:* but if the ordinary Phyſician has the ſtart of the Profeſſor, all the *medical* patients are marked originally in the liſt as for the *medical ordinary;* and then, after the Clinical Profeſſor has made choice of the patients proper for his wards, the admiſſion-liſt is amended, by eraſing the words medical ordinary after the names of thoſe patients, and writing clinical in their ſtead: but the patients from the firſt are taken under the care of the Clinical Profeſſor.

(N° 30.) *The firſt Phyſician comes out in November, fills his wards, aſſorts his diſeaſes, writes notes and regular reports of his patients complaints; completes his experiments, lectures on their caſes; and then empties theſe wards, by delivering his patients over to the ordinary Phyſicians, or by actually diſmiſſing them from the houſe.* Every Clinical Profeſſor (I believe) makes it a rule to take in very few new patients for ſome time before he ceaſes to attend in the clinical wards; ſo that, when his time is expired, he may not leave any great number of patients whom it might be inconvenient to his ſucceſſor

ceſſor to keep in thoſe wards, or to the ordinary Phyſicians to receive at once into theirs. This, which cannot be done in the common wards, either medical or chirurgical, *Patet omnibus*, being the fundamental rule and well-known motto of this Infirmary, is eaſily accompliſhed in the clinical wards, by taking in, during the few laſt weeks of the Profeſſor's attendance, only acute caſes, or ſome of the moſt urgent of the chronic. But when it happens that there are in the clinical wards patients labouring under obſtinate chronic diſeaſes, who are ſo uncivil that they will neither die nor recover, ſuch patients as Dr Cullen uſed emphatically to call the *ſtick-faſts* of a clinical ward, in plain common ſenſe, the beſt thing that can be done for them, is to commit them to the care of another Phyſician. This is giving them every chance for recovery; and it is even poſitively enjoined by the rules of the Infirmary, with reſpect to the patients of the ordinary Phyſicians. And as to the convaleſcents, who muſt occaſionally be left by a Clinical Profeſſor in the Hoſpital, it is hardly conceivable that they ſhould ſuffer any injury by going under the care of another Phyſician.

(11.) *It is unqueſtionably true, that the teaching and demonſtrating by experiment the beſt and moſt approved practice, muſt be upon the whole advantageous to the ſick; yet the making profeſſed trial of every practice is not ſo! it is only on the preſumption of general good, that, in this inſtance, experiments, which muſt be a partial evil, are allowed. Innuendo*, that the Clinical Profeſſors, not content with teaching and ſhowing practically on the patients the beſt practice and its good effects, have been accuſtomed to make trial of every practice; which certainly could not be advantageous to the ſick; but that this partial evil with reſpect to them, that is to ſay, an evil which muſt have been hurtful to many and even fatal to ſome individuals, was allowed, on the preſumption that ultimately it would produce ſome general good.

No

No perſon in the leaſt acquainted either with the hiſtory or with the preſent ſtate of the practice of phyſic, can ever give credit to ſuch an inſinuation. Far from believing that the Clinical Profeſſors have been accuſtomed to try *every practice* on their Hoſpital patients, I do not believe that all of them put together, in the courſe of more than fifty years, that the Medical Clinical Lectures have now been continued, have ever tried even the fiftieth part of the various practices, including of courſe the different medicines, that have been propoſed, and even ſtrongly recommended as ſucceſsful, by Phyſicians, from the days of Hippocrates to the preſent time. I doubt much whether all of them put together have tried even the fiftieth part of the medicines which have been recommended in their own time, and actually employed by their own countrymen, by virtue of his Majeſty's Royal Letters Patent, and newſpaper advertiſements, and ſtrong teſtimonials from numberleſs individuals in all ſtations of life, who declared, and even ſwore moſt ſolemnly, that they, or their friends, or families, had been cured by thoſe very medicines. I am ſure at leaſt that no Clinical Profeſſor ever could ſuppoſe that he had any permiſſion from the Managers, or any right, by virtue of his own profeſſion and ſtation, to make ſuch trials of *every practice:* I am ſure alſo that any Profeſſor who ſhould have attempted to make ſuch trials of every practice, on the ſuppoſition that all of them might be good and uſeful, muſt almoſt inſtantly have become an object of contempt and deriſion to his own pupils: and I have no doubt that the fatal conſequences which muſt often have reſulted from ſuch trials of *every practice*, would ſoon have made ſuch a Profeſſor an object of indignation and horror to his pupils and to the public. As a vaſt number of practices, which at different times have been recommended in phyſic, are abſolutely inconſiſtent with one another, no Phyſician can be ſo fooliſh, or ſo ignorant, as to ſuppoſe that all of them could be uſeful, or even ſafe. To employ all of them, at the ſame time, on the ſame patients

tients, or even ſuch a number of them as could be employed, whether inconſiſtent or not, would be ample evidence of inſanity in any Phyſician; and to employ thoſe which had long been exploded as uſeleſs, or reprobated as pernicious, omitting thoſe which have generally, and moſt recently, been eſteemed the moſt ſucceſsful, implying neceſſarily the death of many of the patients treated in ſuch a manner, would be downright murder, even though ſome remote general good were expected from it. But it is evident that no ſuch good ever could reſult from that kind of practice; for which there could be no juſtification, no excuſe, and no reaſon whatever.

The ſame conſiderations are applicable, in their full force, to what Mr John Bell has ſaid, (2). That *it becomes the duty of the Medical Profeſſor to teach practically, not only the genuine practice, but the various theories of medicine.* The Profeſſor may teach, and certainly ought to teach, by his practice in the clinical wards, the beſt practice that he is acquainted with: and when he alſo gives, as he ought to do in his lectures, his reaſons for that practice, or the theory of it, if the reſult, on trial, correſponds to his theory, by a kind of licence of ſpeech ſtrangely illogical, but not quite unintelligible, he may be ſaid to teach practically the genuine or juſt theory of phyſic. But that a Profeſſor ſhould teach practically the *various theories* of phyſic, is impoſſible in point of fact, as well as illogical in point of expreſſion. Suppoſing a Profeſſor ſo mad, or ſo unprincipled, as to attempt, for the amuſement of his pupils, to practiſe according to the various theories of medicine, nineteen in twenty of which he *muſt* know to be falſe, the reſult of his practice *muſt* not only be deſtruction to his patients, but *ipſo facto a refutation* of thoſe theories, which, according to Mr John Bell's account of the matter, it is the Profeſſor's duty to teach.

The ſame conſideration is a ſufficient anſwer to what Mr John Bell has ſaid, (32.), of the clinical department of this Infirmary.

It

It is the ſchool, too, where the Phyſician not only practiſes on his fellow-creatures, but inſtructs, at once, hundreds of young men, and extends the errors or benefits of his own practice to diſtant times and countries. This is impoſſible, I mean with reſpect to his *errors*; and one of the many great advantages of clinical lectures is, that a Profeſſor, though deceived himſelf, and unreaſonably partial to certain theories and practices, cannot deceive his pupils, as in his general ſyſtematic lectures on the theory and practice of phyſic he may eaſily do. A ſtudent muſt be either culpably negligent, or incorrigibly ſtupid, who does not ſee what practices employed by the Profeſſor are ſucceſsful, and what are uſeleſs or pernicious. It muſt be entirely his own fault, and ſurely a very great fault, if he follows any ſuch uſeleſs or pernicious practices.

As both the theory and practice of phyſic are notoriouſly very imperfect, it is not to be expected, that the Clinical Profeſſors, any more than that the ordinary Phyſicians of an hoſpital, or other Phyſicians in their daily private practice, ſhall always agree, either in their practice, or in their theory. But every ſuch difference of opinion or practice muſt ſtrongly excite the curioſity and attention of their pupils, and even give them the faireſt opportunities of judging for themſelves what are the beſt of the different practices which they ſee employed, and what evidence there is of the different theories which they hear moſt keenly maintained. On many of the moſt important points both of theory and practice, the ſtudents can find no difference among the Profeſſors: and they will probably find but little difference among them with reſpect to thoſe *general* principles, on which we judge of the degree of credit that ſhould be given to the recommendations of any practice, or any remedy, whether new or old; and conſequently of the expediency of trying it in any diſeaſe for which we are ſenſible that we have no effectual remedy, as is often the caſe, or in which the practice generally found ſucceſsful has failed.

Phyſicians, who have any ſhare of common ſenſe and knowledge of their profeſſion, muſt always diſtruſt thoſe practices, and thoſe medicines, which are moſt ſtrongly recommended as univerſally and infallibly ſucceſsful in particular diſeaſes. Not only almoſt univerſal experience hath ſhown that ſuch encomiums are falſe, and founded on credulity, ignorance, or knavery; but any competent knowledge of the ſtructure and functions of the human body, and of the nature, the progreſs, the ſeat, and the cauſes of many diſeaſes, muſt convince them that there *cannot be* ſuch infallible virtues in the remedies or practices recommended. But when the remedies ſo confidently recommended are kept as ſecrets, for the profit of a few individuals, that kind of diſtruſt, not only among the regular faculty, but among all men of ſenſe, is ſtill more ſtrongly eſtabliſhed: the temptations to fraud and falſehood in theſe caſes are ſo great, and the turpitude of thoſe who have a pecuniary intereſt in the fame of their drugs is ſo glaring, that truth cannot be expected from them.

Any medicine or any practice notoriouſly introduced in conſequence of ſuperſtition, muſt always be diſtruſted by thoſe of our faculty who are themſelves not under the dominion of that ſuperſtition: though it cannot be denied that ſome ſuch medicines or practices, by their influence on the imagination, or by the great faith of the patients on whom they were employed, may now and then have had powerful and ſalutary effects. But this mode of operation of any practices or medicines is ſo precarious, that no Phyſician in his ſenſes will ever riſk the lives of his patients, and at the ſame time his own reputation for underſtanding and profeſſional knowledge, by truſting to them, to the excluſion of remedies of more general and certain efficacy.

Laſtly, Any medicine or mode of practice notoriouſly introduced in conſequence of bad reaſoning, and falſe, or at beſt conjectural, notions of the nature and cauſe of a diſeaſe, muſt always be diſtruſted

ed by thoſe of the regular faculty, who perceive the badneſs of the reaſoning, and are aware of the uncertainty, or perhaps the error of the notions that ledto the uſe of them. Even the ſtrong teſtimonials and recommendations which are almoſt always given in favour of every new practice and medicine, are not ſufficient to remove that diſtruſt on the part of a Phyſician, who knows how generally ſuch teſtimonials have proceeded from ſome kind of infatuation, and honeſt deception, not only in thoſe who introduced the new remedies, and who might therefore be thought blindly partial to them, but in thoſe who adopted them, and in thoſe on whom they were employed, and who *bona fide* believed that they had been cured by them.

Yet even that irreſiſtible diſtruſt does not always hinder, nor ought it to hinder, Phyſicians from trying many of the new remedies ſo recommended. There are many very common and deplorable diſeaſes, for which we have certainly no remedy; though perhaps we have plenty of drugs, and various modes of practice, which have been ſaid to cure them. There are ſome diſeaſes for which we have remedies that very generally cure them; which remedies however have often very diſagreeable, ſometimes diſtreſsful or even dangerous effects. A Phyſician is not only juſtifiable in trying, but would hardly be juſtifiable if he did not try, ſome of the new remedies from time to time recommended in thoſe diſeaſes.

Within theſe twenty years a preparation of a mineral ſubſtance, called *Baryta*, or Terra ponderoſa, was ſtrongly recommended by an ingenious and reſpectable Phyſician, the late Dr ADAIR CRAWFORD, as a powerful remedy for the King's Evil; a diſeaſe, in one form or another, perhaps the moſt general, the moſt diſtreſſing, and (including its effects when it falls on the lungs and produces conſumption) the moſt *fatal* that we have in this country. I have no doubt that in Great Britain and Ireland 30,000 people, perhaps

double this number, every year die of the King's Evil in one form or another. For this deplorable diſeaſe at that time we had, and, with ſorrow I muſt ſay, at this hour we have, *poſitively no cure.* Dr Adair Crawford's reaſoning, which led him to try the *Baryta*, and the ſuppoſed analogy of the pretended good effects of ſea-water, were altogether unſatisfactory: but his recommendations of it were very ſtrong, as having been found experimentally ſucceſsful, and were ſoon confirmed by at leaſt as ſtrong teſtimonials from many other Phyſicians. The ſubſtance in queſtion was ſaid to be ſo active, as to have been employed with good ſucceſs, inſtead of arſenic, to poiſon rats. It was therefore neceſſary to uſe it with caution. It has been uſed accordingly ever ſince with due caution by many practitioners; probably by ſome hundreds of us. I believe I myſelf have given it to ſome hundreds, and probably many other practitioners have given it to much greater numbers of patients. The reſult of all this practice, or of many *thouſands* of experiments with it, is a maſs of irreconcileable contradictions. That *many* patients, though *few* in proportion to the whole number who got it, have recovered while uſing it, is moſt certain: juſt as happened formerly to many of thoſe who had the ſame diſeaſe before the Baryta was introduced into practice; and as hath happened more lately to many patients ill of the King's Evil, who did not get that medicine: But the difficult queſtions remain, Did thoſe patients recover in conſequence of it? Did it cure them? or, Were they in any reſpect the better for it? The reſult of my own experiments and obſervations with reſpect to it ſtrongly is, that it is a remedy juſt of the ſame value with the Royal Touch.

Within theſe five years, an herb, called *Digitalis*, or Foxglove, was ſtrongly recommended as a cure for conſumptions; and has been fairly tried in this diſeaſe, I preſume by ſome hundreds of practitioners. I know that I myſelf, within theſe four years, have preſcribed, or concurred in conſultation with other Phyſicians in preſcribing it, to more than 120 conſumptive patients. The general

neral *efficacy* of the medicine was well known: it was known to be ſo *powerful*, that a doſe of it, not larger than a common pinch of ſnuff, might diſorder moſt violently, or very probably kill, a ſtrong man. Yet the foxglove had been much uſed for near twenty years before, as a remedy for dropſy, in many caſes of which it had proved really very uſeful. Phyſicians had alſo learned, from its effects on their dropſical patients, I believe at firſt to their great aſtoniſhment, that the foxglove leſſened very remarkably the quickneſs of the pulſe, bringing it down ſometimes from 120, or 140, to 80, 60, or ſometimes even to 40, or 30, in a minute. This effect of it certainly promiſed to do good in conſumptions, in which great quickneſs of the pulſe, as part of the hectic fever, is one of the worſt ſymptoms: it ſeemed even poſſible, that by that mode of operation it might greatly leſſen, or ſtop altogether, the inflammation and bad ſuppuration in the lungs, and ſo allow the ulcers in them to heal. In a diſeaſe for which we had no remedy; which, in ſpite of all our efforts employed from the hour when the beginning of it is firſt obſerved, proves fatal to three patients out of four; and which, in its advanced or confirmed ſtate, is fatal in at leaſt nineteen caſes out of twenty; there could be no ſcruple about employing a remedy ſo ſtrongly recommended, as having been found practically uſeful; eſpecially as the mode of adminiſtering with ſafety that active and dangerous medicine was by that time very generally known. So to work we went, with great diligence, to try the Foxglove on a large proportion of our conſumptive patients: ſome of whom grew better for ſome time, and a few of whom, I fear very few indeed, have recovered, to all appearance completely and permanently: juſt as uſed to happen, and has continued to happen, to a few of the many conſumptive patients who never got one particle of Foxglove. It ſtill remains *doubtful*, whether, in any circumſtances of conſumption, that boaſted medicine has done any great or permanent

nent good: but to me it ſeems probable, that in a few caſes it has really been of ſervice; and of courſe that in the ſame, or very ſimilar circumſtances, it may hereafter be uſed occaſionally with ſome advantage; juſt as many other medicines may be, and actually have been. But moſt of us, I preſume, have already ſeen more than enough of its adminiſtration to convince us, that it is *not a cure* for conſumption; that very often it does no good, and ſometimes poſitively does harm, by the great weakneſs, ſickneſs, and oppreſſion, that it produces; ſo as to make it neceſſary to deſiſt from the uſe of it, even in ſome caſes in which it had greatly leſſened the quickneſs of the pulſe.

Though the trials made with thoſe two new medicines proved unſucceſsful, I ſhould think it illiberal and unjuſt to blame me, or any Phyſician, for trying them. But if all ſuch trials were deliberately condemned, as wrong at leaſt, if not criminal, certainly they never could be regarded as any peculiar wrong or crime with reſpect to the patients in the clinical wards of this Hoſpital, or as proceeding, in the ſmalleſt degree, from any permiſſion, real or pretended, given by the Managers to the Profeſſors, to try *every practice*, and all kinds of experiments, on thoſe unhappy patients, for *the general intereſts of ſcience.* Probably all of us, and certainly I at leaſt, uſed or tried both thoſe medicines in the diſeaſes which they were ſaid to cure, in private practice, before we uſed them in the clinical wards, and have uſed them twenty or forty times more in private practice than in the Hoſpital.

With equal frankneſs I ſhall mention two other very celebrated new remedies, for the *not trying* of which I know I have been more blamed by my own pupils and others, than ever I was for all the remedies, new or old, that I have tried in the courſe of my life. One of theſe was another boaſted cure for conſumption, recommended about ten or twelve years ago; namely, the breathing, inſtead of pure air, what might be called (at leaſt comparatively)

tively) foul or tainted air; that is, common air mixed with a certain proportion of ſome kinds of air, (*gaſes*), which by themſelves are unfit for the purpoſe of breathing. The reaſoning that led to this curious practice was abundantly ingenious, but to me appeared as flimſy, and as ſlenderly ſupported, as any that we have in phyſic. Nor was this the worſt of it: for ſuppoſing the theory of conſumption, and of hectic eſpecially, which was given as a reaſon for the practice recommended, and the correſponding theory of the ſea-ſcurvy, to be perfectly true, the moſt obvious practical inference from them was, that, to cure a conſumption, nothing more could be wanted but juſt to put the patient on the common ſea-faring diet, only taking care not to continue it too long, leſt he ſhould get the ſcurvy inſtead of his conſumption. That very diet, which almoſt certainly would give a healthy perſon the ſcurvy in three or four months, ought juſt as certainly to have cured a conſumption in one or two months. This inference had not altogether eſcaped the view of the ingenious author of the new theory and practice: but it does not appear that he ever choſe to put his doctrine to that deciſive teſt. For theſe reaſons, and alſo becauſe the theory as well as the practice recommended were inconſiſtent with what I knew of the good effects of milk and vegetable diet, and of riding on horſeback in our pureſt country-air during our beſt ſummer-weather, (which exerciſe, by the by, had been at leaſt as ſtrongly recommended as an *almoſt certain cure* for conſumption by Dr Sydenham, one of the moſt eminent Phyſicians that ever practiſed in England, as any of the new remedies have been by thoſe who propoſed them), it was impoſſible for me not to diſtruſt ſadly the firſt teſtimonials, ſtrong as theſe of courſe were, in favour of the practice recommended, or to be ambitious of the honour of being the firſt in this country to make trial of it. But as it was ſtill *poſſible* that thoſe teſtimonials might be true, and that the practice might prove a valuable addition to the

the art of phyſic, I was curious to learn how it ſucceeded with others: for I knew that many practitioners would be eager to try it. The *firſt* and the *laſt* piece of intelligence that I received about it, after an interval of many years, were equally edifying and deciſive. The firſt was from one of my own pupils; who tried it with great diligence on ſeveral patients, and was delighted to find that it agreed vaſtly well with them all; and that all of them were much the better for it: but all of them died of their diſeaſe in a few months. This, being interpreted, means, in plain Engliſh, that he and his patients had been much amuſed and gratified for ſome time by the new practice, though this in reality did no good; the diſeaſe running its natural courſe, juſt as it would have done if no ſuch practice had been employed. The laſt intelligence, or rather *no* intelligence that I got of it, within theſe few weeks, was from an eminent practitioner in this city, Mr Benjamin Bell, whom I chanced to aſk whether he had any recent experience of the *pneumatic* practice in queſtion. He ſaid, he had not: but added, that very lately he had put the ſame queſtion to a great London Doctor, to whom he had occaſion to write about a patient, and had received for anſwer, that he (the London Doctor) believed ſomething of that kind had been talked of ſeven or eight years ago; but that he had heard nothing of it lately.

Another new and ſtrongly recommended practice, which I have never tried, is one mentioned in my former Memorial, (page 227.): I mean the uſe of the nitric acid, *(Aquafortis)*, properly diluted, inſtead of quickſilver, (properly prepared), as a cure for the faſhionable diſtemper. It was ſuppoſed, that not the quickſilver, but ſomething (oxygen) united with it when duly prepared for uſe, and ſeparated from it in the body, was the remedy for that diſeaſe. This might be true, for aught that I knew; though the proof of it was by no means complete or ſatisfactory. But it was inſtantly coupled with another ſuppoſition, of which I could ſee neither

neither proof nor probability, namely, that all the good effects generally obtained from the uſe of the common preparations of quickſilver proceeded from the oxygen, and all the bad effects of them from the metal itſelf. As the pure liquid quickſilver may be drunk to the amount of a pound every morning for many days, or perhaps months together, without doing either good or harm, and in fact had been drunk very freely ſome fourſcore years ago by many hundreds of fine people in London, juſt becauſe it was the faſhion, I ſhould have thought it more probable that the bad as well as the good effects of our good old medicine proceeded from the ingredient of acknowledged great activity, than from the one which ſeemed to be inert itſelf, but a convenient vehicle for introducing the other ingredient into the human body. But as theſe cautious ſpeculations were diſregarded, and *aqua fortis*, as containing the ſuppoſed ſalutary oxygen without the ſuppoſed pernicious metal, was freely uſed and ſtrongly recommended as admirably ſucceſsful, I was very anxious, notwithſtanding my diſtruſt of the reaſoning, to get, from practitioners whom I knew, the moſt authentic and impartial accounts of the ſucceſs of the new remedy. One of the firſt to whom I applied for ſuch information was an eminent Surgeon already mentioned, Mr Benjamin Bell: and the firſt intelligence I got from him about it was, that he had already had ſeveral patients who were ſuppoſed and ſaid to have been cured by it; but found to their ſorrow that they were not cured, and were fain to ſubmit to be cured by the old remedy, under his care. This diſcouraging information, and ſome ſimilar inſtances that I have met with ſince, and ſome inſtances of diſtreſſing effects from the Nitric acid, not very unlike to ſome of the bad effects of Mercury, eſpecially on the ſtomach and bowels, have hitherto deterred me from truſting the life, or even the noſe of any patient to the new remedy. Yet I am by no means ſure that it is altogether uſeleſs, even in the diſeaſe for which it has been recommended:

nor can I think a Phyſician blameable, if, in certain caſes of that diſeaſe, he ſhould employ it.

Yet frequent as our diſappointments with reſpect to the virtues of new remedies, whether medicines or peculiar modes of practice, have been; and great as our indignation muſt be at many of our brethren, for their irrational credulity, in firſt allowing themſelves to be deceived, and then in aſſiſting to deceive others, by their careleſs obſervation and too confident teſtimonials of the efficacy of ſuch remedies; we are not *entitled* to reject, and refuſe to try, all new medicines and practices: for this would amount to a reſolution not to allow the practice of phyſic to be improved; though we all muſt feel to our ſorrow, that there are many frequent, ſevere, and dangerous diſeaſes, for which we have no cure, and many others, in which our beſt practice, with the help of all the remedies moſt recommended in them, is but precarious, in ſome caſes failing altogether, and in others proving but imperfectly ſucceſsful.

We are not even entitled to reject, without a trial, the teſtimony of our brethren in favour of practices, the good effects, or mode of operation of which, we are unable to explain. Such is the imperfection of our boaſted ſcience, that the pernicious influence of ſome things as cauſes of diſeaſes, and the ſalutary mode of operation of other things as remedies, are to us equally inſcrutable, and perhaps will ever remain ſo. Yet the bare knowledge of the ſimple unexplained facts, that ſome ſuch things are hurtful, and others of them uſeful, may be of infinite importance: and it is the duty of every Phyſician, in his practice, to avail himſelf of that empirical knowledge.

Of the numberleſs new medicines and practices, which, in the courſe of the laſt century, were introduced with the higheſt encomiums, two have actually been approved and eſtabliſhed by the moſt ample and deciſive experience, as highly ſalutary and important; namely, firſt, Inoculation for the ſmall-pox, introduced by

LADY

Lady Mary Wortly Montague about fourſcore years ago; and, ſecondly, Inoculation for the cow-pox, in order to preſerve the perſon ſo inoculated from the ſmall-pox for ever after; a practice introduced by Dr Jenner within theſe five years. Both theſe practices were originally, and the latter of them ſtill is, altogether empirical. The former, when firſt employed, was recommended entirely by the ſtrong teſtimonials of its great ſucceſs: the latter is ſo at this hour. It is a kind of reproach to our *ſcience:* for if all the Phyſicians in Europe were put to the rack, they could not aſſign even the ſhadow of a reaſon why the cow-pox, any more than the great pox, ſhould ſecure a perſon for ever afterwards from the ſmall-pox. The caſe, I believe, is ſomewhat different with reſpect to the good effects of inoculation in making the ſmall-pox mild and ſafe. We certainly know ſome circumſtances about it which contribute to that good effect: but I doubt much whether any mode of preparation before inoculating, or any uſe of the cool regimen after it and during the diſeaſe, be all on which the benefit of inoculation depends. There ſeems to be ſomething about it not yet explained. At any rate, for a long time after it was firſt uſed in England, the benefit of it, aſcertained by experience, was not in the leaſt explained, or accounted for, by medical ſcience. The hiſtory of phyſic does not afford two other ſuch inſtances, of practices, not only not recommended by any ſcience or theory, but ſeemingly each of them a downright outrage on humanity and common ſenſe. To infect a man deliberately with a loathſome diſeaſe, derived from a brute; or wilfully to communicate to a man a very dangerous and loathſome diſeaſe, though taken from another man, in order to preſerve him from the danger of the ſame diſeaſe, might well be called an abſurd as well as a dangerous experiment: and certainly any Phyſicians who ſhould have preſumed to try, or to recommend, ſuch experiments, would ſoon, and moſt deſervedly, have become objects of indignation and horror to their countrymen; if the whole tenor

of their conduct had not ſhewn that they acted uprightly, to the beſt of their judgment, for the benefit of thoſe on whom the experiments were tried.

I can remember, that between forty and fifty years ago, when there were ſtill many doubts and fears and keen diſputes about inoculation for the ſmall-pox, my father took care to get all his children inoculated; partly, as I learned many years afterwards, becauſe he knew that five of his own brothers and ſiſters had died of that diſeaſe; which ſeemed to imply that it was peculiarly fatal, in conſequence probably of ſome peculiarity of conſtitution, in his family. His conduct in getting his own children inoculated, with all of whom it ſucceeded perfectly, enabled him to recommend it generally and confidently; and precluded a number of frivolous and endleſs diſputes about it. I believe his example as well as his precepts contributed much to make the practice of inoculation almoſt univerſal at Aberdeen, where at that time he lived.

Little more than three years ago, in conſequence of the ſtrong teſtimonials which I had ſeen in favour of it, I wiſhed to *try* the inoculation with the cow-pox. It happened that Dr TIERNY, a diſciple of Dr JENNER, was at that time (ſpring 1800) one of my pupils, and had juſt received from him ſome cow-pox matter. The firſt perſon on whom I *tried* it, and the firſt perſon in whom I ever ſaw the diſeaſe, was a child of my own; and this too at the time when his mother was nurſing him. I believe I was the firſt Phyſician in Edinburgh who tried or recommended that practice; which certainly I never could or durſt have recommended to any perſon, if I had not employed it, when I had an opportunity, in my own family. The ſimple queſtion, which, on that ſuppoſition, would have met me at once, muſt effectually have ſtopped my mouth. I ſoon learned that it had been practiſed ſix months before by Dr ANDERSON of Leith, with its uſual complete ſucceſs. Since that time it has become ſo common in Edinburgh, that it is no longer an object

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of alarm, nay, hardly of curioſity, even among the great maſs of the people.

When Phyſicians, in the trials which they make of new medicines and new practices, or in declining to try ſuch remedies, do to their patients, whether in great hoſpitals or in private houſes, juſt what they do to thoſe who are deareſt to them, their patients ſurely have no reaſon to complain of them. Nay, I cannot for my heart conceive what better, or what elſe, they expect, or would have of us. But as Mr John Bell and his clients have been at ſo much pains to convince the public, that the practice of the Clinical Profeſſors, in the wards allotted to them in this Hoſpital, is a *partial evil*, (that is to ſay, a very horrible evil to the unhappy patients who are the ſubjects of it), but that it is *allowed, on the preſumption of general good*, eſpecially in hopes that it will promote the *general intereſts of ſcience*; it is plain, that they think there is ſomething in it that is very bad for the individual patients on whom it is employed, and ſomething in it which ought not to be, and would not be, allowed, were it not on the preſumption of general good, and with a view to promote the general intereſts of ſcience.

On that moſt ſerious point, where the health and the lives of the poor and unhappy entruſted to our care are at ſtake, we ought certainly, without ſcruple, to make uſe of every *friend* and every *foe*.

I ſhould therefore humbly beg of Mr John Bell and his clients, whether friends or foes to mankind in general, and to us Clinical Profeſſors in particular, to be a little more explicit; and to ſpecify what mode of practice they think we ought to follow in the clinical wards, in every reſpect, but eſpecially with reſpect to the trying of experiments, or the employing of very old or very new, of unuſual or of dangerous remedies, *purely for the good of the individual patients* on whom they are employed, and without any regard to

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the general intereſts of ſcience, or to any remote and *general good* whatever. For example, let them ſtate the general principle or rule of conduct that ſhould direct us in the treatment of patients labouring under diſeaſes, for the cure of which reſpectively we have modes of practice or medicines of great and certain efficacy. Let them ſay what we ought to do in thoſe diſeaſes, (if there be any ſuch), for each of which we have *many* certain cures: let them ſay what we ought to do with our patients labouring under diſeaſes for which we have no certain cures, but in which different remedies, of great though precarious efficacy, are occaſionally uſed with ſucceſs: let them ſay what we ought to do in thoſe diſeaſes, for which we are ſenſible that we have no cure, but for which ſome new, and by us untried remedies have been ſtrongly recommended: let them ſay explicitly what they would have us do, in thoſe caſes, in which the remedies that we firſt employed, becauſe we thought them the beſt, proved unſucceſsful, and whether, in ſuch common caſes, they would have us deſiſt from all further attempts to cure the patients, and fairly leave them to their fate, or whether we ought to try other practices and other medicines, new or old, on thoſe patients, in order to give them every chance for their lives; and in what order, or on what principle of ſelection and preference, theſe trials ought to be made. It will be particularly obliging, and not only very uſeful to the patients, but highly gratifying to me, and I dare ſay to all my brethren, if they will favour us with a correct and ample catalogue of all the medicines and practices hitherto known and recommended by Phyſicians, which we ought *not* to employ. To this catalogue I hope they will add, by way of ſupplement, a liſt of ſuch new medicines and practices, hitherto unheard of, but hereafter to be recommended, which we muſt not adopt, nor even try, on any account or pretence whatever. Such directions, admonitions, and catalogues, from a ſet of men ſo well qualified to give them, will be a much more effectual *ſafeguard to the poor* than

than all the charters of the Royal College of Surgeons. On the undeniable principle formerly explained, That whatever is beſt for the patients is alſo beſt for the ſtudents to ſee and learn, and moſt for the eaſe, the honour, and the intereſt of the Profeſſors to do, I can promiſe for myſelf, and without the fooliſh ceremony of aſking them any queſtions, I can venture to promiſe for all my colleagues, that we ſhall be eager to ſtudy the *monita et præcepta medico-moralia* of Mr John Bell and his clients, and happy to profit by them on every occaſion.

Such a work, the product of their joint labours, by explaining and eſtabliſhing the laws or general principles of moral conduct in Phyſicians towards their patients, will in the firſt place refute of courſe thoſe pernicious and deteſtable principles on the ſame ſubject which I had ſtated in my former Memorial, (page 138. to 145.), and in this one, (page 388. to 393.), as part of my introductory Clinical Lecture: and in the ſecond place, it will enable them to convict the Clinical Profeſſors of an infinite number of the moſt horrible atrocities in their hoſpital-practice, of which atrocities, expreſſed by ſtrong but dark hints, Mr John Bell has given no other proof but plenty of points of admiration. Theſe, though very cheap, for they coſt no more than ſemi-colons, certainly have great weight: but till the law be clearly aſcertained, if he and all his clients were ſplit into points of admiration, and ten of theſe were poſted after every word of his Philippic, they could not prove that the law had been violated.

Such a code of medical moral laws, as I humbly crave of thoſe who have ſo highly bepraiſed the Managers of the Infirmary and the Clinical Profeſſors, for a pretended conduct which I ſhould conſider as a groſs violation of the firſt principles of law, of juſtice, of humanity, and of common ſenſe, will ſerve another good purpoſe, in which they are deeply intereſted: It will convince the public that they have ſome kind of moral principle to direct their

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profeſſional conduct; a propoſition which the whole tenor of Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me, but eſpecially of the praiſes beſtowed on all who permitted, and all who conducted ſuch clinical lectures as he deſcribed, and the approbation and vote of thanks of his clients for that good work, have rendered more than doubtful. The principles avowed in that work will to many well-meaning people appear leſs than nothing in morality; ſomething like a negative quantity in algebra, or debt far beyond the value of a perſon's eſtate.

Not content with repreſenting the conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors as every thing atrocious and horrible, which could be diſtinctly expreſſed in words, or even clearly conceived to be done by Phyſicians to the poor and unhappy entruſted to their profeſſional care, Mr John Bell, like a man of genius, has availed himſelf of the boundleſs power of imagination in thoſe who were to peruſe his Philippic. For example, (27, 28.), *The Hoſpital itſelf, and all its patients, are at the command of the Clinical Profeſſors! They walk in among thoſe patients! look at them! hang their noſological labels and tallies round their necks! and ſend them to their own wards, there to prick off the lines of the prevailing doctrines upon their bodies.*

MACBETH. How now, you ſecret, black, and midnight hags? What is't you do?

WITCHES. A deed without a name.

This has always been regarded, with good reaſon, as one of the fineſt ſtrokes of the ſublime and horrible that even the genius of SHAKESPEARE produced: yet it is but juſtice to Mr John Bell to acknowledge, that he has attained a ſublimity of horror far beyond the reach of SHAKESPEARE himſelf. He has given us *a name without a deed:* and thoſe who have got the name may exert their own imaginations to find a deed correſponding to it in all its horrors. Much as I know of the clinical

nical wards, I muſt own I cannot even gueſs what is meant by *pricking off the lines of the prevailing doctrines upon the bodies of the patients:* nor can I gueſs what is meant by *hanging our noſological labels and tallies round their necks.* It is uſual, and I think it ſhould be an invariable rule, to affix the name of every patient at the head of his bed, both to ſave time and trouble, and alſo to prevent miſtakes: perhaps it would be right to inſert on the ſame card the name of his diſeaſe: for aught I know this may ſometimes have been done; but I never heard, nor do I believe, that any ſuch cards, *alias* noſological labels and tallies, were ever hung round the necks of the patients. To do this would be uſeleſs, and abundantly ridiculous; but ſuch a card could no more be hurtful to a patient than a necklace or a locket hung in the ſame manner. The word *noſological* being one of our technical words, and abſolutely unintelligible to thoſe who are not of our profeſſion, may mean any thing, or every thing, the moſt horrible that a gloomy or a diſordered imagination can conceive. Yet the uſe of our technical noſological names for diſeaſes, inſtead of their common Engliſh names, which the patients and their friends could underſtand, is a matter of delicacy and kindneſs to them, and therefore unqueſtionably of duty on the part of the Phyſician. The principle in this caſe is the ſame as that which leads us, in giving our reports, which are generally in Engliſh, to mention in Latin any circumſtances that might either alarm or offend the patients; and alſo to give almoſt all our preſcriptions in Latin, that the patients in the Infirmary, juſt like thoſe in private practice, may not be diſtreſſed unneceſſarily by knowing what medicines they are getting. Suppoſing, for example, the name of the diſeaſe, as well as that of the patient, to be expreſſed on a card, hung at the top of the bed, there could be no harm in writing *John Black*, *Hydrothorax*; or *Mary White*, *Phthiſis*; but it would be very ſhocking to thoſe patients, if the one ſhould read, inſtead of *Hydrothorax*, Water in the breaſt, and the other, inſtead of *Phthiſis*,

Conſumption; for each of them would regard this intimation as ſentence of death.

In the whole of that moſt ingenious, elaborate, and eloquent account, which Mr John Bell has given of the conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors in this Hoſpital, it is plain that he kept ſteadily in view the noble principle, at leaſt as old as Terence, probably as old as Menander,

Nihil est
Quin malè narrando poſſit depravarier:
Tu id quod boni est excerpis; dicis quod mali est.

Never, I believe, was the principle more faithfully applied, or better illuſtrated: but ſtill there was a difficulty, which to men of ordinary genius would have appeared inſurmountable; namely, to procure belief of that marvellous and horrible account, or even to make it credible that the author of it, and his employers and abettors, did themſelves believe it. The expedient employed for this purpoſe by Mr John Bell, and fully adopted and ſanctioned by his clients, is indeed moſt admirable; and to the beſt of my knowledge perfectly original. It conſiſts, as every reader muſt have obſerved, in profeſſing the higheſt approbation of that deteſtable ſyſtem, and beſtowing the moſt fulſome praiſes on the Managers for permitting, and on the Profeſſors for executing, that horrible mode of inſtruction. The quotations from that part of Mr John Bell's Anſwer to me being ample and faithful, every reader may judge for himſelf, whether it was his purpoſe to repreſent the Clinical Lectures really as an innocent and laudable inſtitution, or to make them, and the Profeſſors, and the Managers, and the Hoſpital itſelf, objects of general indignation and horror. To me it does not appear that this can ever be made a ſubject of doubt or diſpute: yet to that moſt horrible account are premiſed the following extravagant compliments (3, 4, 5, 6.) to the Profeſſors, and to the Managers:

nagers: *We hope that no expreſſion of ours will be interpreted as diſreſpectful to that department of teaching and practice, which we conſider as peculiarly honourable to thoſe who fulfil the duty, as the most uſeful part of that courſe of education, which has made this ſchool of medicine esteemed above any in Europe.*

The period was most honourable to the Patrons and Managers of this charity, and ever to be remembered, when, indifferent to vulgar prejudice, and undiſmayed by popular clamour, they permitted this very important department of public teaching to be aſſimilated with their Hoſpital. Regardleſs of every thing but the general interests of ſcience, you received within your walls a department which could bring along with it nothing but public odium.

I firmly believe that the clinical lectures, conducted as they always have been, and I truſt ever ſhall be, are a *very uſeful* part of the courſe of medical education in this ſchool: but I am not quite convinced, nor is it neceſſary at preſent to enquire whether or not they are literally the *most uſeful* part of our medical education. I am ſure at leaſt that ſuch clinical lectures as Mr John Bell has deſcribed, waving all thoughts of the atrocity of them with reſpect to the patients, would be uſeleſs, and worſe than uſeleſs, with reſpect to the ſtudents. None of theſe are ſtudying phyſic as a ſpeculative ſcience of mere curioſity, and wiſhing to know, or perhaps to ſee, all the effects, good or bad, of every practice and every medicine on the human body; juſt as they wiſh to learn all the known effects of heat and mixture in chemiſtry. All of them wiſh to learn the moſt ſucceſsful practice of phyſic, which is to be the ſerious buſineſs of their lives. They might attend many courſes of ſuch deteſtable clinical lectures, and ſee many thouſands of experiments tried on ſome hundreds of miſerable patients, without learning the leaſt of that kind of practice, by the ſucceſs of which they are themſelves to live and proſper. It may be preſumed, that every perſon of good ſenſe, however little acquainted with phyſic, will under-

ſtand this at once, and perceive the truth of it. But it may eaſily be illuſtrated by ſimilar imaginary inſtances in other practical arts, which, like phyſic, depend on ſcientific principles, and have gradually been improved, both by accidental diſcoveries and obſervations, and by well-contrived experiments. If a young man who meant to earn his bread as a watchmaker, inſtead of learning the practice of an eminent maſter, ſhould employ himſelf diligently for ſeven years in ſeeing a conſtant ſucceſſion of experiments with pendulums, and ſprings, and balances, and fuſees, he certainly would turn out a very ſcurvy watchmaker. A youth meaning to be a dyer would probably acquire as little uſeful knowledge of that art, by ſeeing for ſeven years ſome thouſands of experiments annually made with all manner of dye-ſtuffs: and a young brewer, who, inſtead of learning the valuable art of making good ale, ſhould devote the years of his education to ſeeing thouſands of experiments in malting and brewing, would probably have but few cuſtomers, and no cuſtomer more than once. It may be judged, therefore, that I at leaſt ſhould not conſider the fulfilling of that duty, ſo exquiſitely deſcribed by Mr John Bell, as in any degree honourable to the Profeſſors: on the contrary, I ſhould think it infamous, as well as criminal, to have any concern in it. But to judge fully of the merit of Mr John Bell's compliment to the Clinical Profeſſors collectively, and to myſelf individually as one of them, his account of their practice muſt be compared with what I have ſtated very fully and ſtrongly in my former Memorial, (page 138. to 146.), on the ſubject of trying experiments on patients. If what he has ſtated as the very purpoſe of the inſtitution of Clinical Lectures, and the avowed conduct of the Clinical Profeſſors, be true, all that I had ſaid on that ſubject, in my former Memorial, and in my introductory Clinical Lecture, (quoted page 388. to 393. of this), muſt be not only the vileſt falſehood, but the moſt deteſtable hypocriſy. However, I need not be at much pains to vindicate myſelf from ſuch an inference: for every perſon who reads that extract from my introductory

troductory Clinical Lecture muſt admit, that for me, after profeſſing ſuch principles, to have acted in violation of them, that is, to have conducted the Clinical Lectures and Practice in the manner that Mr John Bell has ſo admirably deſcribed, and ſo highly praiſed, would have ſurpaſſed all power of the human countenance.

Laviſh as Mr John Bell has been of his praiſes of the Managers, for their liberal and honourable conduct, in permitting the inſtitution of Clinical Lectures; and for their firmneſs in being *indifferent to vulgar prejudice, and undiſmayed by popular clamour* on that ſubject; he has omitted many other circumſtances, equally true, equally important, and much more to their honour, on that memorable occaſion. He ought undoubtedly to have mentioned, that they were unſhaken by the frequent earthquakes and ſtill more frequent eruptions of volcanos which occurred at that time; that they were unmoved by the daily eclipſes of the ſun and moon, which alarmed every inhabitant of Edinburgh except themſelves; that they were regardleſs of the aſtoniſhing number of ghoſts which uſed to walk the ſtreets at broad noon, to the great terror of the good living people of Edinburgh; and that they were deaf to all the admonitions of the horſes and oxen, who uſed to ſpeak in every field, as fluently as the ableſt lawyers did at the bar. To the beſt of my knowledge and belief, all theſe portentous prodigies were juſt as poſſible, and as true, as that popular clamour, and vulgar prejudice, which he ſo highly bepraiſes the Managers for diſregarding; *innuendo*, that there were ſuch prejudice and clamour for them to diſregard.

It will perhaps appear a very bold, if not a deſperate undertaking, to attempt to prove the *negative* in this caſe, namely, that at the time when the Medical Clinical Lectures were inſtituted, that is, ſeveral years before I was born, there was no vulgar prejudice, and no popular clamour againſt them. Yet, conſidering how generally unfortunate Mr John Bell and his clients have been, with re-

ſpect to their moſt important facts, much more ſtrongly aſſerted than the one at preſent under conſideration, it ſeems but a reaſonable and candid preſumption to ſuppoſe that they have been at leaſt as unfortunate on this point; and certainly it would be fair and neceſſary to require of them to give ſome proof of that fact, which is irreſiſtibly conveyed by their *innuendo*. I am ſure I never heard of any ſuch vulgar prejudices or popular clamours having occurred at the time when the Clinical Lectures were inſtituted; and if any ſuch had occurred at that time, I ſhould think it almoſt impoſſible that the memory, the tradition, or the records of them ſhould have been loſt in little more than half a century.

I have examined, with the moſt ſcrupulous care, the records of the proceedings of the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, at that time, and for twelve years afterwards: but in them I can find no veſtige of ſuch things; which, if they had occurred, ſurely *muſt* immediately have become known to the Managers, *muſt* have engaged their moſt ſerious attention, and *muſt* have induced them to explain, as they eaſily could have done, the nature and purpoſe of clinical lectures, in ſuch a manner as to remove all vulgar prejudices, and ſilence all clamours againſt them. As no record of ſuch things, nor any the ſlighteſt alluſion to them, is to be found in the minutes of the Managers, we may infer with much confidence, that no ſuch things ever exiſted.

But further, from many ſtrong and obvious conſiderations, I think it may almoſt be proved, *a priori*, that no ſuch vulgar prejudices and popular clamours *could have exiſted* againſt the new eſtabliſhment of clinical lectures.

Suppoſing, in the firſt place, that the word clinical and the phraſe clinical lectures had never been heard by the good people of Edinburgh before the 1ſt of February 1748, when Dr Rutherford firſt announced to the Managers his intention of reading ſuch lectures;

lectures; it ſeems to me *impoſſible* that the good people of this city ſhould have taken alarm or umbrage at ſuch an innocent word or phraſe; which certainly could not convey to them the notion of any thing bad, or dangerous, or even experimental; for it would have conveyed to them no meaning at all. That new word *clinical* muſt have been to the vulgar juſt as unintelligible as any word in the Japaneſe language: but certainly their curioſity would have been excited to know the meaning of it; and this curioſity would ſoon have been completely gratified, by the new word being explained in a manner moſt ſatisfactory to them. But in fact the phraſe clinical lectures at that time was not abſolutely new, even to the vulgar of Edinburgh; eſpecially to many who had been patients in this Hoſpital. Many of theſe, and conſequently many more of their friends and acquaintance, muſt, in the courſe of the preceding twenty years, have learned the meaning of it by its uſe and application, juſt as we learn the meaning of all common words and phraſes: and the meaning of clinical lectures, as fixed and learned in that way, muſt have been preciſely ſuch as, on Mr John Bell's own principles, to preclude that perverſe, malevolent, and atrocious meaning, which he has been pleaſed to give it, as ſynonymous with *experimental*. The fact to which I allude is this: For ſeveral years before Dr Rutherford reſolved to begin to give regular courſes of clinical lectures on the caſes of his *medical* patients, Dr Alexander Monro *primus*, as I have been informed by his ſon the preſent Dr Monro ſenior, was accuſtomed to give *occaſionally* clinical lectures on the caſes of ſome of his *chirurgical* patients, when he attended in his turn and operated in this Infirmary. Theſe lectures, and the practice to which they related, though truly *clinical*, Mr John Bell himſelf muſt admit, *could not* have been *experimental*, or by any of the patients ſuppoſed to be ſo; for he tells us expreſsly that he knows of no experiments in ſurgery. As Dr Monro *primus* was the moſt eminent Surgeon in Edinburgh, and probably one of

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the beſt in the world, it may fairly be preſumed that his patients took no offence, either at him or his clinical lectures. That favourable notion of clinical lectures *muſt* neceſſarily have been extended and applied by the patients, and all their acquaintance, to the medical clinical lectures given by Dr Rutherford. The patients, far from having any objections to be under the care of Dr Rutherford in this Infirmary, *muſt* have regarded that circumſtance as a piece of great good fortune to themſelves. Dr Rutherford, at that time, if not the very firſt, was nearly the firſt, I believe ſecond only to Dr John Clerk, in reputation and practice as a Phyſician in this city: and it muſt be remembered, that at the time when he began his clinical lectures, and for more than three years afterwards, all or almoſt all the Fellows of the College of Phyſicians attended by monthly rotation in this Hoſpital. Surely no patient could be ſo irrational as not to think it better for himſelf to be under the care of ſuch an eminent Phyſician as Dr Rutherford, than to take his chance of all the Phyſicians in Edinburgh, good, bad, and indifferent.

When he bepraiſed the Managers ſo highly for permitting the inſtitution of clinical lectures, Mr John Bell ſeems either not to have known, or wilfully to have ſuppreſſed, that the permiſſion given by the Managers, was only that of reading the lectures *in ſome convenient place under the roof of the Infirmary*. Dr Rutherford did not aſk their permiſſion to read *clinical lectures:* it is implied in the intimation which he gave them, that he knew he had a right to read ſuch lectures without aſking their permiſſion; which I have no doubt every Profeſſor of Phyſic had to do, on the caſes of thoſe patients whom he treated during his time of attendance by rotation in the Hoſpital. This right had actually been admitted, and exerciſed, in the inſtance of Dr Monro *primus*, with reſpect to his chirurgical patients in the Infirmary. I doubt even whether the Managers could have prevented the Fellows of the College of Phyſicians

Phyſicians, *not Profeſſors* in the Univerſity, from reading ſuch lectures on the caſes of their Hoſpital-patients, when they attended in their turns. Their right to attend in the Hoſpital was coequal with that of the Managers to regulate its domeſtic economy and pecuniary concerns: it was unqueſtionably eſtabliſhed by the ſame charter. In the title of Doctor of Medicine is implied, and in the Diploma conferring that title there is always expreſſed, the right of teaching phyſic by lecturing or otherwiſe, as well as the right of practiſing it. The Managers could not even have attempted to prevent any of the Phyſicians from reading clinical lectures on the caſes of his Hoſpital-patients, without firſt ſhowing, or endeavouring to ſhow, that ſuch lectures were ſomehow injurious to the patients or to the Hoſpital. This they never could have ſhown: on the contrary, it would have been proved indiſputably at once, that ſuch lectures could not fail to be very much for the good of the patients: and the Managers would of courſe have been laughed at, or worſe than laughed at, for their fooliſh and illiberal conduct.

Dr Rutherford, who had the merit of beginning the Medical Clinical Lectures, had alſo the ſagacity to foreſee of what importance they might become, both to the Infirmary, and to this Medical School: and therefore very wiſely and honourably reſolved to make them, from the firſt, ſubſervient to the pecuniary intereſt of the Hoſpital, by not permitting any ſtudent to attend them, who did not alſo pay to the Infirmary. This was the purpoſe of his intimation, and requeſt to the Managers, and of their permiſſion to him, to have a proper place, under their roof, in which to read his Clinical Lectures. It is ſelf-evident, that theſe lectures might have been read as well, and as eaſily, and much more conveniently, in his common place of teaching in the College. The paſſages already quoted from the minutes of the Managers, (page 404. to 407. of this Memorial), ſhow ſufficiently how the permiſſion of ſeparate wards, and at firſt of ten, afterwards of fifteen, and at laſt of twenty

patients, to the Clinical Profeſſors, came to paſs. This was going on *before* two ordinary Phyſicians were permanently appointed to the Infirmary; and is in fact, though not expreſsly in words, a ſmall remnant of the original ſyſtem of the indiſcriminate attendance of the whole College of Phyſicians: which remnant has been allowed to continue in favour of the Medical Profeſſors, and of their ſtudents, and of the funds of the Hoſpital: and for the good of the public at large. Whatever may be thought of the expediency of permitting the Clinical Lectures to continue, it is evident at leaſt, that, at the time of their inſtitution, the Managers could have neither merit nor demerit in permitting them. It was the act and deed of Dr Rutherford; which they could not have hindered; nor could they have hindered, and therefore it would have been folly, as well as turpitude and guilt, to have permitted Dr Rutherford, and every Fellow of the College of Phyſicians, to practiſe in the way that he thought beſt; that is, to try what remedies and experiments he pleaſed, on the patients under his care in this Hoſpital, during his monthly attendance by rotation.

Suppoſing, however, that there had been a popular clamour and vulgar prejudice againſt Clinical Lectures, as is implied in Mr John Bell's *innuendo*; the Managers, if they had really been indifferent to it, as he inſinuates that they were, far from deſerving any praiſe for ſuch conduct, would have deſerved the greateſt reproach; they would have been guilty of a notorious neglect and breach of truſt, in allowing, not only the pecuniary intereſts of the inſtitution to be materially injured, but even the benevolent purpoſe of it to be in a great meaſure fruſtrated, by the prevalence of ſuch groundleſs prejudices and clamours, to which they could eaſily have put an end, in a manner the moſt honourable to themſelves, moſt beneficial to the Hoſpital, and moſt ſatisfactory to the public.

The principle to which he imputes that *pretended* conduct on their

their part, and for which he bepraiſes them accordingly, is, that they were *regardleſs of every thing but the general intereſts of ſcience.* If they really were ſo; if they were regardleſs of the welfare and of the lives of any of the unhappy ſick poor admitted into the Hoſpital; far from deſerving to be praiſed, they certainly deſerved to be hanged, for diſregarding the general indefeaſible principles of moral conduct, for violating their oath as Managers of the Infirmary, for fruſtrating the benevolent purpoſe of it, for ſacrificing the lives of many of thoſe patients whom they committed to the care of the Clinical Profeſſors, to be made the ſubjects, and occaſionally the victims, of their cruel but ſcientific experiments. The Hoſpital was inſtituted, and the Managers of it were appointed, for the *relief of the ſick poor*; not for the *general intereſts of ſcience.* Theſe no doubt *muſt* eventually be promoted by a well-managed hoſpital; but this eventual benefit *muſt* reſult as a ſecondary object, from the faithful accompliſhment of the firſt and chief purpoſe of ſuch a charitable inſtitution.

It is truly a wonderful, and to me it ſeems a perfectly new invention, to praiſe a ſet of men, of decent character both in public and private life, for doing what they never did or thought of; or could have done without incurring the blackeſt guilt and fouleſt infamy; without making themſelves objects of general indignation and horror, and probably even of exemplary puniſhment. So ingenious a contrivance does infinite honour to the author or authors of it, who ought certainly to take out a patent, to which they are well entitled, in order to ſecure to themſelves, and to the heirs of their talents and virtues, all the profit as well as the praiſe of their own original invention. There can be no doubt that many thouſands, who had not genius enough to think of ſuch an expedient for themſelves, will be eager to employ it on numberleſs occaſions; juſt as many thouſands have very freely employed the leſs perfect contrivance of praiſing thoſe whom they wiſhed to

traduce, for what good they had done; and then, after having thus eſtabliſhed their own credit, in point of veracity and candour, proclaiming, with every poſſible aggravation and reproach, whatever was unfavourable, or could be told in a manner unfavourable, to thoſe towards whom they had diſplayed ſuch exemplary candour and benevolence. *Mrs Candour* (in the School for Scandal) had not the honour of this contrivance, as the illiterate vulgar ſuppoſe. It was in great uſe and good repute long before her time; and generally expreſſed by the happy phraſe of *betraying with a kiſs*, in honour of Judas Iſcariot, who is ſuppoſed to have been the inventor of that mode of complimenting. But there is no reaſon to believe that he ever thought of ſo ſublime a mode of accompliſhing his purpoſe as the one which has given occaſion to theſe remarks; and I dare ſay the proudeſt day of his ſplendid life, he would have given both his ears to have been the author of it. The compliment in this caſe is not a kiſs, but a bite, ſharper and more envenomed than a ſerpent's tooth. From the eaſe and freedom with which Mr John Bell hath availed himſelf of this happy expedient, and from the high approbation which it ſoon met with *from his clients*, as was amply teſtified by their vote of thanks, (moſt unjuſtly expreſſed in the name of the *whole Royal College of Surgeons*,) it may be preſumed that it was not quite ſo new either to him or to them, as it was to me, and to all whoſe opinion of it I have hitherto had occaſion to hear. Long acquaintance, and ſome familiarity, with ſuch things, are neceſſary, to get the better of vulgar prejudices, and to enable a perſon to perceive their merit and to admire them, inſtead of turning away from them inſtinctively with diſguſt and abhorrence.

Vice is a monſter of ſuch hideous mien,
As to be hated needs but to be ſeen;
But ſeen too oft, familiar with her face,
We firſt endure, then pity, then embrace.

If that mode of complimenting have not yet got a name, which I ſuſpect is the caſe, I humbly propoſe that henceforth it ſhall be called, *betraying with a bite.* But this muſt be underſtood with a general *ſalvo jure* in favour of all who may have any claims to the honour of the invention, and any ambition to call it after their own names; and moſt chiefly in favour of Mr John Bell, if he ſhall prove, or even chooſe to aſſert, that it is *bona fide* his own original contrivance. If ſo, I conſent that henceforth and for ever it ſhall be called *complimentary johnbellation.*

Whether the invention be old or new, by whatever name it ſhall henceforth be called, whoever was the author of it, however familiar it may have been to Mr John Bell and his clients, and however much approved by them; it is at leaſt ſo uncommon to hear men bepraiſed for the moſt deteſtable conduct of which they could be guilty, that few people will know at firſt what to think of ſuch praiſes, and of thoſe who beſtow them, and of thoſe on whom they are beſtowed. As I know of no real inſtance which can be employed to explain and illuſtrate the point in queſtion, I muſt take an imaginary one for that purpoſe. I ſhall ſuppoſe an author of ſuperior genius to praiſe a ſet of judges for their meritorious conduct, in always attending ſtrictly to the intereſt of their own families and friends, regardleſs of every thing elſe, even in the diſcharge of their public duty and truſt. No perſon ſurely can be ſo ſtupid as not to ſee the drift and the malevolence of ſuch praiſes. It is unqueſtionably right for every judge, as for every other man, to attend to the intereſt of his family and his friends; as it is for the managers of an hoſpital to promote the intereſts of medical ſcience: but it would be not only wrong, but a ſhameful breach of truſt, and atrocious guilt on the part of judges, or of managers of an hoſpital, to endeavour to promote the intereſts, either of their own families and friends, or thoſe of medical ſcience, regardleſs of their own ſupreme and ſacred duty. Bad as

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mankind may be thought, and violent and inveterate in their controverſies as medical diſputants certainly are, I do not believe that any of them are ſo depraved in principle, or ſo blinded by paſſion, as to think it innocent or praiſe-worthy in any individual, or any ſet of men, to do wrong to ſome, though but a few, in order to do good to others, however many. I ſhould juſt as ſoon believe, that a man who owed L. 1000 in ſmall ſums to five hundred individuals, ſhould think it right to procure that large ſum by robbery, or theft, from one or two perſons, in order to pay thoſe juſt though ſmall debts: but if the lives of theſe perſons were to be ſacrificed, when their property was plundered, for that good purpoſe, the conduct of the perpetrators would ſurely be reckoned incredibly atrocious. Yet this unheard-of atrocity is no more or worſe than what Mr John Bell and his clients have imputed to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary, and to the Clinical Profeſſors, and have made the ſubject of their higheſt praiſes. The value of thoſe praiſes, and the purpoſe of them, I ſhould think cannot be miſtaken; but if any perſon does not fully underſtand them, let him conſider what ought to be the limits of that commendable liberality and zeal for the intereſts of ſcience. Would it be innocent and right to ſacrifice, for that good purpoſe, one in a hundred of the patients received into the clinical wards? or one in fifty, or one in ten of them, or all of them? Would it not be equally right, and ſtill more meritorious in the Managers of the Infirmary, to extend that permiſſion of trying experiments to all the other patients in the Hoſpital? Why ſhould it be confined to thoſe under the care of the Clinical Profeſſors? Why ſhould not one in fifty, or one in ten, or one half, or all of the patients received into the Hoſpital, be ſacrificed for the general intereſts of ſcience, without regard to any thing elſe? The power of the Managers extends not beyond the walls of the Hoſpital: but why ſhould not Phyſicians be permitted to

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try all the ſame experiments on all their patients, rich and poor, in private practice? Why ſhould they not be praiſed for all the patients whom in this good cauſe they kill by retail, as Generals and Admirals are for the enemies they kill in wholeſale, for the good of their country?

I truſt therefore it is but juſtice to Mr John Bell and his clients, to ſuppoſe that the whole account which they have given of the purpoſe of clinical lectures, of the manner in which they are conducted, of the merit of the Managers in permitting, and of the Profeſſors in conducting them, is falſe from end to end. But as this is a very tender point, my ſuppoſition is to be underſtood with the moſt complete *ſalvo jure* to them. They are well entitled, and heartily welcome, to repeat and perſiſt in their aſſertions, and even to endeavour to eſtabliſh them by proof: any ſuch endeavour, or even ſuch repeated aſſertions on their part, will ſoon eſtabliſh, beyond all diſpute, ſome propoſitions with reſpect to themſelves, which muſt be very edifying, and deeply intereſting, to the public. They ſurely cannot fail to perceive, that, if they really hold, or even for whatever reaſon profeſs, thoſe principles which I have explained and illuſtrated, and traced to their neceſſary conſequences, they muſt, *ipſo facto*, be underſtood to renounce all claim to public eſteem or confidence. They will not only prove and illuſtrate, in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt manner, my doctrine of the abſolute neceſſity of ſelection among men of their profeſſion, either for hoſpital-duty or for private practice; but will have the merit of pointing out to the public, which I could not have preſumed to do, ſome of thoſe individuals who ought firſt and moſt certainly to be excluded, and held as diſqualified for that ſacred truſt. *Hic niger eſt; hunc tu Romane caveto;* muſt be the univerſal ſentiment and caution with reſpect to every one of them. Any man in his ſenſes, if himſelf or his family were ſick, would as

ſoon

ſoon think of calling in a mad dog into his houſe, as a practitioner who held the principles which they have ſo ſtrongly avowed. Certainly no ſuch practitioner ought to be, or ever would be employed, when one of different principles could be found. But they muſt alſo conſider, that the other ſuppoſition, I mean, that they did *not* hold ſuch principles, and did *not believe* their own aſſertions, neceſſarily implies ſome bitter conſequences with reſpect to themſelves; not only deliberate falſehood, but a degree of malevolence, which, for the honour of human nature, I hope is without example; ſuch malevolence, that they were content to make themſelves odious and infamous, in order to make the Clinical Profeſſors and the Managers of the Royal Infirmary ſtill more odious and infamous, and the Infirmary itſelf an object of deteſtation and horror, in the eſtimation of their countrymen. This is more than an accidental view of the cloven foot; it is a complete diſplay of the great owner of it in all his hateful uglineſs.

The ſituation of thoſe of whom he has taken ſuch entire poſſeſſion, and whom he has ſo ſtrongly marked for his own, is indeed deplorable. A dilemma of the ſame direful kind with that ſtated in page 371. but worſe in ſome reſpects, awaits them here. They either believed, or they did not believe their own aſſertions. If they *did not* believe, if they *do not* prove them, they muſt be infamous for aſſerting ſuch atrocious and malevolent falſehoods. If they *did* believe them, and *ſtill perſiſt* in them, and *now attempt to prove* them, they muſt be fiends in human ſhape, who not only delight in guilt and cruelty of the blackeſt kind, and think it praiſe-worthy, but have deliberately done all in their power to make it more extenſive, and perpetual.

Their caſe is as hopeleſs, and fully as much to be lamented, as if they had all, with Mr John Bell at their head, run violently down a ſteep place into the ſea, and been choked in the waters.

It

It would be in vain for me to make any more remarks on their paſt, or to ſuggeſt to them any hints with reſpect to their future conduct; for I am ſure they will pay no regard to any thing that I can ſay to them: but perhaps they will pay ſome regard to the weighty admonition of the wiſeſt of men, in whoſe words I ſhall take my leave of them: "All the ways of a man are clean in his "own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the ſpirits. There is a way "that ſeemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways "of death."

JAMES GREGORY.

St ANDREW'S SQUARE,
16th June 1803.

Printed by Murray & Cochrane, Craig's Close, Edinburgh.

